

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 16, 2007

The Honorable Alan Mollohan, Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice  
and Commerce  
H-309 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice  
and Commerce  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

As you know the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was reauthorized and signed into law by President Bush on January 5, 2006. VAWA 2005 reauthorized lifesaving programs that have been at the core of our community's response to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking for over a decade. The Act also aimed to reach and serve more sexual assault survivors, by authorizing the Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP). SASP creates a desperately-needed federal funding stream for direct services, which will assure rape crisis centers have the resources to continue providing vital services to all victims of sexual violence. We write to request your support for implementing the goals of SASP by fully funding this program.

According to findings from the 2006 National Violence Against Women Survey, 1 of every 6 women has been raped in her lifetime, and 1 of every 33 men. While rape crisis centers and other organizations have made tremendous progress towards ensuring that sexual assault victims receive the services they need, these agencies' ability to serve the needs of all victims of sexual violence - both female and male, young and old - has historically been hampered by a significant lack of resources. And now, more victims of sexual assault are coming forward for help than ever before.

In reauthorizing VAWA last year, Congress recognized that when VAWA was first passed in 1994 and then reauthorized in 2000, it did not include resources specifically designated for direct services for sexual assault victims. Thus, the Sexual Assault Services Program was designed to address this earlier omission. Not only does this program provide funds for service providers, but it also makes available resources to state, territory and tribal sexual assault coalitions who work to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of local programs. Funding is also directed to Native American tribes as well as culturally-specific organizations to better reach and serve victims in communities that have been historically underserved.

We do appreciate the difficult budget situation that faces Congress this year; however, more than 700 women and girls are raped or sexually assaulted each day, and young people ages 16-24 are raped and sexually assaulted at rates higher than any other age group. We sincerely hope that you will support fully funding the Sexual Assault Services Program at \$50 million for FY 2008 so these

victims can receive the services and support they need as they navigate the medical, criminal justice and social support systems.

Sincerely,

Tony Balch

Stephanie Smith

John A

Jim Langevin

Chris Fontana

Candlyn McCarty

Paul Murre

Michael H. Mendenhall

Glenn Caron

Betty Sutton

Annun

Michael E. Caputo

Neil Abercrombie

Rail M. Hijalva

Peter Weller

Leand L. Brown

Jim Pitt

Tom Allen

Cheryl Shyer

Fred R. Platts

Mark A

Tom Bruce

Carolyn S. Zy

Fiji Stumms

Howard L. Berman

Greg Miller

Rick Berman

Diana DeStette