

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2021 (VAWA) (H.R. 1620)

BACKGROUND

Gender-based violence—which includes domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence—occurs across all races, ages, classes, and ethnic backgrounds, but at disparate rates and with disproportionate impacts for women of color and other marginalized communities.

- **1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence**, and more than three women are murdered by their partners each day.ⁱ
- **1 in 5 women has been raped** in their lifetime.ⁱⁱ
- Nearly 1 in 6 (**19.1 million**) **women have been stalked by an intimate partner** during their lifetime to the point that they felt very fearful or believed that they would be harmed or killed.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 57% of multi-racial women, 48% of American Indian / Alaska Native women, 45% of Black women, 34% of Latinas, 37% of white women, and 18% of Asian or Pacific Islander women have been the victim of intimate partner violence.^{iv}

Women who experience gender-based violence face a broad range of long-term health, economic, social, and other consequences that impact their quality of life and well-being.

- Between 21% and 60% of **survivors of intimate partner violence lose their jobs** for reasons related to their abuse.^v
- Between 22% and 57% of **women who are homeless report that intimate partner violence was the immediate cause** of their homelessness,^{vi} 38% of all domestic violence victims will become homeless at some point in their lives,^{vii} and more than 80% of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime.^{viii}
- **Negative physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health issues** have been linked to gender-based violence. Survivors are also at a higher risk for developing addictions to tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.^{ix}

WHAT THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA) REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2021 DOES

- **Improves services for victims** of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
- **Preserves and expands housing protections for survivors;**
- **Provides economic security assistance for survivors** by reauthorizing the National Resource Center on Workplace Responses, protecting employees from being fired because they are survivors of sexual assault or domestic violence, and protecting survivors' eligibility to receive Unemployment Insurance;
- **Enhances judicial and law enforcement tools**, through reauthorization of the STOP grants and expansion of permissible use of the grants;
- **Helps prevent intimate partner homicides;**

- **Helps protect Native American women**, by including provisions to improve the response to missing and murdered Native American women, improving tribal access to federal crime information databases, and reaffirming tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators of violence and assault;
- **Reauthorizes and updates the SMART Prevention Program** to reduce dating violence, help children exposed to violence, and engage men in preventing violence;
- **Expands grants under the Public Health Service Act** to support implementation of training programs to improve the capacity of early childhood programs to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking among the families they serve;

THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT PROMOTES SAFETY AND PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SUPPORT

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has been instrumental in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Since its initial authorization in 1994, and as a result of improvements established during the 2000, 2005, and 2013 reauthorization processes, VAWA has:

- Directly addressed childcare, affordable housing, community support, transportation, and other barriers that survivors of gender-based violence face in accessing safety and resources.
- Ensured that survivors of gender-based violence from underserved communities have gained access to the same lifesaving and life-changing assistance and resources as other survivors.
- Significantly improved criminal justice and civil court responses to gender-based violence, which has led to an increase in reporting and criminal justice involvement by survivors and an increase in survivors seeking protective orders.
- Greatly strengthened federal-state partnerships to most effectively and efficiently combat gender-based violence, including provision of training and technical assistance, while giving states and jurisdictions the flexibility to respond to their own unique needs.

Please support the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021.

ⁱ Smith, S. G., Zhang, X., Basile, K. C., Merrick, M. T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2018, November). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief-Updated Release* (U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/2015data-brief508.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ Id.

ⁱⁱⁱ Id.

^{iv} Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017, April). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010-2012 State Report* (United States, U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>.

^v Emily F. Rothman et al. How employment helps female victims of intimate partner violence: A qualitative study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. (2007). 12(2). Retrieved 16 January 2017 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.12.2.136>.

^{vi} National Network to End Domestic Violence. (2018). *Domestic Violence, Housing, and Homelessness*. Retrieved from https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Library_TH_2018_DV_Housing_Homelessness.pdf.

^{vii} Id.

^{viii} Aratani, Y. (2009, September). *Homeless Children and Youth: Causes and Consequences* (Rep.). Retrieved http://www.nccp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/text_888.pdf.

^{ix} D'Inverno, A.S., Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Chen, J. (2019, August). *The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence: A 2015 NISVS Research-in-Brief* (U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvs-impactbrief-508.pdf>.