

NEW MEXICO VAWA GRANTS TO BE ANNOUNCED ON 9/25/00

STOP Violence Against Indian Women Discretionary Grants

4 continuation grants to be awarded to:

Eight Northern Indian Pueblos	\$75,471*
Jicarilla Apache Tribe	\$108,931*
Pueblo of Laguna	\$74,674*
Pueblo of Santa Ana	\$72,517*

Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grants

3 Rural Continuation grants to be awarded to:

American Indian Law Center	\$150,000*
Morning Star House, Inc.	\$474,776*
San Juan Pueblo	\$350,000*

Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies

1 continuation grant to be awarded to:

Taos Pueblo	\$100,000*
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Civil Legal Assistance

1 continuation grant to:

El Refugio, Silver City	\$304,391*
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* Final award amount to be determined pending final budget review.

A Plea on 'America's Problem'

Clinton Urges Hill to Preserve Violence Against Women Act

By ELLEN NAKASHIMA
Washington Post Staff Writer

SANTA FE, N.M., Sept. 25—President Clinton today called on Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, a landmark 1994 law that has been widely praised as one of the most effective vehicles for combating domestic violence.

The bill has been stalled on Capitol Hill and will expire on Saturday unless the GOP leadership moves it to the floor for a vote.

"This is not rocket science. Yes, we're close to an election. . . . But it is wrong to delay this one more hour. Schedule the bill for a vote," Clinton said, speaking at the Genoveva Chavez Community Center here.

Clinton was joined by Connie Trujillo, executive director of Esperanza, one of the oldest shelters in the country for battered women. Her shelter has served more than 36,000 clients, and with money set aside under the law, Esperanza has been able to hire a court-based advocate to help women obtain protection orders.

Although the act enjoys bipartisan support, House GOP leaders have shown little enthusiasm for pushing the bill while they're struggling to finish more pressing legislative priorities before heading home to campaign for reelection.

Some Republicans have questioned the cost of the revised bill. The House version would allocate \$3.8 billion over the next five years, while the Senate would provide \$3.2 billion. But most of their objections concern turf.

John Feehery, a spokesman for House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.), said they are working with Rep. Constance A. Morella (R-Md.), a staunch supporter of women's rights issues, "to try to find a way to get it to the floor."

One of the hold-ups is the House Education and Work-

force Committee, which wants to weigh in on two of the bill's major programs that fall under its domain. But Feehery said the leadership is trying to move the legislation. "We're trying to make sure it's a good bill," he said. "We think it's something that can be done."

A spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) attributed the delay in moving the bill to leadership's focus on getting the spending bills done.

"We're all for it. We've been trying to get it done for several weeks," said John Czwartacki, Lott's press secretary. "There's no reason that it wouldn't get done."

Over the past five years, the law has allocated \$1.6 billion to state and local programs, including funding for special police units focused on sex crimes, and legal assistance grants so women can obtain restraining orders.

The law established the National Domestic Violence Hotline, which has logged more than half a million calls since 1996 and now averages 13,000 a month.

The new bill would expand the reach of the program, funding transitional housing for women and children and providing support for such groups as the elderly, the disabled and Native Americans.

A Bureau of Justice Statistics report shows that domestic violence has declined since 1993. The number of women experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner declined 21 percent from 1993 to 1998, Clinton said.

But domestic violence is still a problem, he said. Nearly one-third of women murdered each year are killed by their intimate partners.

"For too long, women . . . like those in the room today have fought a lonely battle," he said. "Despite the fact that it almost always occurs at home . . . domestic violence is not just a family problem that neighbors can turn away from. It's not just a woman's problem that men can turn away from. It is America's problem."

In Florida, Not Where Bush Wanted to Be

Lagging GOP Effort Spurs Unease In Biggest State With a Close Race

By DAVID VON DREHLE
Washington Post Staff Writer

SARASOTA, Fla.—The rally had all the markings of a big success.

Some 5,000 Floridians turned out on a sultry Friday to cheer the arrival of the blue-and-white 757 with "Bush-Cheney" in giant letters on the side. Texas Gov. George W. Bush was in peak form, whipping up the crowd with his promise that the Democrats "don't know what's about to happen to them."

But in one respect, it was a troubling moment for the GOP nominee. Sarasota County is just about the last place Bush wanted to be, fewer than 50 days before the election—an overwhelmingly Republican area in a state that was supposed to be locked up by now.

Florida is the biggest state in the country where the race is close. And there are signs of unexpected difficulty for Bush everywhere: in the armies of retirees drawn to Vice President Gore's prescription drug plan, in the Jewish community eager to elect Joseph I. Lieberman to national office, in the sprawling communities of Central Florida suburbanites who want to stay the course in a time of economic plenty.

Even here, on GOP turf, beneath the picturesque surface of cheering kids and flag-waving voters, there are bad omens. Several leading Republicans in this GOP stronghold report rising unease with the party's nominee, especially among female voters. A veteran Republican chairman in a nearby county says the Bush effort in Florida is surprisingly disorganized.

And the sign most talked about: The seeming lack of effort on the part of Bush's state chairman—his younger brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. When George W. took the stage in Sarasota, Jeb was not by his side. (He joined up later for stops in Tampa, Miami and Orlando.)

The latest polls show that Bush's double-digit lead of last summer has vanished, and he's now tied with Gore in a state that he can't afford to lose. He, his brother and other leading Republicans all predict they'll find a way to win Florida come November, but it will be at a cost of millions in television ads—more than \$1 million a week right now—and lots of precious campaign days. A barnstorming bus tour is under consideration. That's time Bush won't be able to spend in other closely fought states.

"The luster is definitely off here for George W.," says the author of the Almanac of Florida Politics, Miami Herald editor Tom Fiedler. "The state is still his to lose, but the issues favor Gore."

Bush's visit to the Sarasota-Bradenton airport, about an hour south of St. Petersburg and Tampa, was a sign that he expects the state to hinge on a last-hours push to turn out voters. Indeed, during a 24-hour swing through the state, he held

four rallies designed to rev up his core supporters—the people who will stuff envelopes, display lawn signs and telephone friends on his behalf.

They could use some revving.

"The reason it is a toss-up is we have a lot of disillusioned people," says Giovanna Deveny, a longtime Republican and former president of the local League of Women Voters. She happens to be upset with Jeb Bush, and thus with his brother, over a school funding issue.

Michael Zucker, treasurer of the county's Republican executive committee, is smitten with Lieberman and dazzled by the way he and Gore "somehow are working as a team. With the Republicans, I don't see that combination."

One longtime civic activist reports widespread grouching among dispirited Republicans. She recalls a recent luncheon at which she raised the question of who will win the presidential election. "The room lit up," she says, "and I sat back and listened to Republican women talk about how furious they were at the Bush campaign."

These Gulf Coast Republicans are a reminder that Florida politics is more complicated than some media shorthand would suggest—not just the Cubans and conservative Christians versus the Roosevelt Democrats in the South Florida condos.

Instead, between these extremes float a wide range of constituencies: soccer moms, non-Cuban Hispanics, African Americans and blacks from Caribbean countries, even liberal Republicans. Many Sarasota-area Republicans are retirees steeped in the traditions of Theodore Roosevelt rather than Ronald Reagan. Especially the women among them have proved willing to vote for Democrats in recent elections—including President Clinton, the late governor Lawton Chiles and Sen. Bob Graham.

The winner in Florida, strategists in both parties agree, will be the man who can do best in the swing zone of Central Florida, the so-called I-4 corridor running from the Tampa Bay area (including Sarasota) to Daytona Beach. Bush can't afford to have GOP voters leaking away. But Republicans here are worried that Gore has only begun to hurt Bush—they believe he has more room to gain ground among pro-choice and conservationist Republicans.

It was not supposed to be this way.

After Jeb Bush cruised to the governor's mansion in 1998, with broad appeal and clockwork organization, the pundits took for granted his ability to deliver the state for his brother without breaking a sweat.

But as the months have gone by, more and more people have wondered when Jeb would start delivering. One Gulf Coast county GOP chairman says that he has seen little sign that Jeb's machinery is starting to roll for George W. "The Bush

campaign in Florida is about an inch deep," he grumbles. "I don't know what [Jeb] is doing."

Aboard his brother's plane Saturday morning, Jeb Bush said he has always expected a close race in his state, because the two parties are fairly evenly matched, and the last 10 or 15 percent of voters to make up their minds are notoriously willing to switch parties. "By definition," he says, "it's going to be close."

In other interviews, however, the younger Bush has said that he worries about casting a shadow over his brother if he raises his profile too high. It's a commonplace in political reporting to say that Jeb is the more impressive of the brothers. Whether Jeb Bush agrees with that or not, he goes out of his way to be bland when he appears beside George W.

In Tampa, Miami and Orlando last week, Jeb Bush never spent more than a couple of sentences in introducing his brother, and they were nondescript sentences indeed. He urged a room full of donors in Tampa to bring 10 voters each to the polls, then gave the microphone to "a decent, caring man"—the candidate. He was a bit more effusive in Miami, where he saluted his brother in Spanish as "the next president of the United States."

Realistically, of course, the swing voters of Florida are not likely to choose a president because they like his brother.

The winning formula here, leading Republicans believe, begins with a hard-sell on Bush's plans for Medicare drug coverage and Social Security. Tom Fiedler predicts that more than half the votes in Florida will be cast by people over 50, and for them "the key issues are security issues; they are in retirement or approaching retirement and they don't want people experimenting with their programs," Fiedler says. "George W. needs to take extra time to reassure older voters."

Beyond that, he must sell his education proposals. "I think Republicans in this state win on education," says Jeb Bush. "I ran on it, and my brother is pretty well-known for his plan."

Then they have to turn out their voters.

Bush forces are outspending the Gore camp dramatically in Florida, and if Gore continues to spend frugally here it will only help Bush. The vice president campaigned Monday in St. Petersburg and is in Miami today, but Gore doesn't need to win Florida to be elected, while most people agree that Bush does. It is 25 electoral votes—but more than that, it's a canary in the mine.

If Bush loses in Florida, Republicans agree, he will also be losing in a lot of other places.