

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release

May 17, 2000

VICE PRESIDENT GORE CALLS ON CONGRESS TO REAUTHORIZE VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN ACT

Today the Administration called on Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) for another five years in order to continue keeping women safe from domestic violence. According to the Department of Justice's "Intimate Violence" Special Report, released today, intimate partners -- including current or former spouses, boyfriends and girlfriends -- committed fewer murders in 1996, 1997, and 1998 than in any other year since 1976. This is proof that more women are safer today than they have been in almost a generation.

The report also found that in 1998, women experienced 20.3% fewer violent offenses at the hands of an intimate partner than in 1993. This is evidence that our administration's Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the over \$1 billion in grants for law enforcement assistance and battered women shelters which have been made under VAWA are working.

As I travel the country talking to youth, I have found that one of their greatest concerns is the devastating amount of domestic violence in their homes. While the numbers released today are very encouraging, the fact remains that there were still 876,340 violent offenses against women in 1998--down from 1.1 million in 1993. While the work of our administration has been key to reducing domestic violence--we cannot relax our effort to protect women against domestic violence. This is the time to intensify our efforts with the goal of eliminating violence in the home in any form.

That is why I am pledging to work with Congress to reauthorize the important VAWA legislation. And, I reiterate my wholehearted commitment to working with Congress to restore protections struck down by the Supreme Court earlier this week to give victims of gender-motivated violence the power to sue their attackers for lost earnings, medical expenses, and other damages.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release

June 30, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE VICE PRESIDENT ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

I applaud the bipartisan efforts of both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees in approving Violence Against Women (VAWA) legislation this week. In 1994, with bipartisan support, Congress passed this historic legislation that created a national response to women and children victimized by family violence and sexual assault. Over the last six years, VAWA has provided over \$1.6 billion to support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victim advocates, and intervention and prevention programs to address violence against women at the federal, tribal, state, and local levels.

I urge Congress to act expeditiously to bring this vital legislation to the floor for a vote so VAWA and the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund can be reauthorized. We must all work together to ensure that this vital legislation is passed this year. This law has made a tremendous difference in the lives of countless women, but we need to pass this critical legislation this year to continue our fight against domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release

September 26, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE VICE PRESIDENT
ON THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

By approving the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act today, the House of Representatives has taken an important bipartisan step toward final passage of this much-needed legislation, just days before its expiration on September 30th.

We must not allow the beginning of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month to mark the end of the Violence Against Women Act. In October alone, approximately 75,000 women will become victims of beatings, and in many cases their children will be attacked as well. Violence against women is a national concern that requires a strong, national response. The Violence Against Women Act has been, and must remain, a powerful tool in the fight against domestic violence, stalking and sexual assault.

I urge the Senate to follow the lead of the House and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. We don't have a moment to lose when it comes to protecting the lives and health of women, children and America's families.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 27, 2000

TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
TO THE HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER
AND THE SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

Dear Mr. Leader:

I am writing to urge you to bring the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to the Senate floor this week. This bill is a top priority for my Administration.

An estimated 900,000 women suffer violence at the hands of an intimate partner each year, demonstrating the urgent need for this legislation. Since VAWA was enacted, the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services have awarded approximately \$1.6 billion in Federal grants to support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victim advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs in order to combat violence against women. We must reauthorize these critical programs immediately.

As you know, yesterday, the House overwhelmingly passed VAWA reauthorization by a vote of 415-3. In the Senate, VAWA has similar bipartisan support with over 70 cosponsors. If Congress does not act this week, however, VAWA's authorization will expire on September 30, 2000. The Senate should not delay, and I urge you to pass a freestanding version of the Biden-Hatch VAWA reauthorization bill this week. The women and families whose lives have been scarred by domestic violence deserve nothing less than immediate action by the Congress.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 2, 2000

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH, 2000

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Domestic violence transcends all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic boundaries. Its perpetrators abuse their victims both physically and mentally, and the effects of their attacks are far-reaching -- weakening the very core of our communities. Domestic violence is particularly devastating because it so often occurs in the privacy of the home, which is meant to be a place of shelter and security. During the month of October, all Americans should contemplate the scars that domestic violence leaves on our society and what each of us can do to prevent it.

Because domestic violence usually takes place in private, many Americans may not realize how widespread it is. According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, conducted jointly by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Justice, each year in the United States approximately 1.5 million women are raped and/or physically assaulted by their current or former husbands, partners, or boyfriends. Many of these women are victimized more than once over the course of a year. As unsettling as these statistics are, it is also disturbing to realize that the children of battered women frequently witness these attacks, thus becoming victims themselves.

My Administration has worked hard to reduce domestic violence in our Nation and to assist victims and their families. The cornerstone of our efforts has been the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which the Congress passed with bipartisan support in 1994 and which I signed into law as part of our comprehensive crime control bill. This important piece of legislation, which contains a broad array of ground-breaking measures to combat violence against women, combines tough penalties with programs to prosecute offenders and provide assistance to women who are survivors of violence.

In the 6 years since I signed VAWA into law, the legislation has provided more than \$1.6 billion to support prosecutors, law enforcement officials, courts, victim advocates, and intervention efforts. We have quadrupled funding for battered women's shelters, created the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and supported community outreach and prevention programs, children's counseling, and child protection services. The Department of Justice has awarded more than 900 discretionary grants and 280 STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) Violence Against Women formula grants to help State, tribal, and local governments and community-based organizations establish specialized domestic violence and sexual assault units, train personnel, enforce laws, develop policies, assist victims of violence, and hold abusers accountable.

These VAWA programs are making a difference across the country. A recent report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that the number of women experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner

declined 21 percent from 1993 to 1998. I call on the Congress to reauthorize and strengthen VAWA so that we may continue to build on the progress we have made in combating domestic violence in our Nation.

Through VAWA and other initiatives and programs, we are striving to create a responsive legal system in American communities that not only prevents domestic violence and sexual assault, but also ensures that every victim has immediate access to helpful information and emergency assistance. By taking strong public action against this crime, we are creating a society that promotes strong values, fosters a safe, loving home environment for every family, and refuses to tolerate domestic violence in any form.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2000 as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, law enforcement agencies, health professionals, educators, community leaders, and the American people to join together to end the domestic violence that threatens so many of our people.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 6, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I applaud the House of Representatives for passing vital legislation today to combat trafficking in humans and strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The Trafficking Victims Protection Act will provide important new tools in the campaign to combat trafficking, a modern form of slavery and an insidious human rights abuse. VAWA, which expired on September 30, has significantly improved the lives of thousands of women who are victims of domestic violence, and has assisted state, local, and tribal law enforcement to combat domestic violence and sexual assault. It is imperative that this law be reauthorized this year, and I urge the Senate to pass this legislation without delay.

30-30-30

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
OCTOBER 11, 2000**

I congratulate the Congress on its bipartisan work to pass the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which contains legislation to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as legislation to strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These initiatives have been important priorities of this Administration, and I look forward to signing them into law.

The Administration strongly supports this comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation as part of our vigorous campaign to combat trafficking in persons, a modern day form of slavery, and to punish the international criminal organizations that engage in it. Trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises in the world, ensnaring up to two million additional victims around the world each year, including 50,000 annually here in the United States. On March 11, 1998, I issued an Executive Memorandum directing the Administration to pursue a three-pronged strategy to combat this insidious human rights abuse. This strategy of prosecution of traffickers, providing protection and assistance for trafficking victims, and prevention of future trafficking has provided the framework for our work in this country and abroad. The legislation approved by Congress today will continue and strengthen this comprehensive strategic and policy framework, providing new tools to protect trafficking victims and punish traffickers. It will institutionalize our government's response, laying the groundwork for future administrations to carry this important work forward, and will ensure that trafficking of persons assumes the prominent place on the world's agenda that it deserves until we end this horrible practice.

I signed VAWA into law as part of my crime bill in 1994, and during the last six years, VAWA has made a crucial difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children. The Violence Against Women Act has enabled communities to expand prevention efforts, enhance the safety of more victims, and hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable for their acts. More needs to be done, however, when on average each year from 1993 through 1998, 22 percent of all female victims of violence were attacked by an intimate partner. The legislation approved by the Senate today will do more to help these women by reauthorizing critical VAWA grants programs; providing important protections for battered immigrant women; providing additional assistance to Indian tribes; reauthorizing the domestic violence hotline, and helping state and tribal courts improve interstate enforcement of protection orders. It is especially fitting that Congress passed this crucial legislation in the month designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



The President's Interagency Council on Women

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Honorary Chair

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright
Chair

Secretary of Health and Human Services
Donna Shalala, Immediate Past Chair

DATE: 10/
TO: Heather Howard / Melanne Verveer

ORGANIZATION: _____

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MESSAGE:

POTUS statement on trafficking leg

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET): (2)

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Paragraph for POTUS statement on Trafficking Leg

I congratulate the Congress on its bipartisan work to pass this significant piece of legislation. The Administration strongly supports this anti-trafficking legislation as part of our vigorous campaign to combat trafficking in persons, a modern day form of slavery as well as one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises in the world. On March 11, 1998, I issued an Executive Memorandum directing my Administration on steps to take for strong and effective action against this insidious human rights abuse which affects up to two million persons around the world each year, including 50,000 annually here in the United States. Since then, we have taken this issue out of the shadows and put it on the world's agenda. This legislation will institutionalize our government's response, laying the groundwork for future administrations to carry this important work forward. It provides new tools in our mission to protect trafficking victims and lock up the traffickers

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Chappaqua, New York)

For Immediate Release

October 11, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I congratulate the Congress on its bipartisan work to pass the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which contains legislation to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as legislation to strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These initiatives have been important priorities of my Administration and I look forward to signing this bill into law.

My Administration strongly supports this comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation as part of our vigorous campaign to combat trafficking in persons, a modern day form of slavery, and to punish the international criminal organizations that engage in it. Trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises in the world, ensnaring up to 2 million additional victims around the world each year, including 50,000 annually here in the United States. On March 11, 1998, I issued an Executive Memorandum directing my Administration to combat this insidious human rights abuse through a three-part strategy of prosecuting traffickers, providing protection and assistance for trafficking victims, and preventing future trafficking. This strategy has established the framework for our work in this country and abroad. The legislation approved by Congress today will strengthen this approach, providing new tools to protect trafficking victims and punish traffickers. It will institutionalize our government's response, laying the groundwork for future administrations to carry this important work forward, and will ensure that trafficking of persons assumes the prominent place on the world's agenda that it deserves until we put an end to this horrible practice.

I signed VAWA into law as part of my crime bill in 1994, and during the last six years, VAWA has made a crucial difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children. The Violence Against Women Act has enabled communities to expand prevention efforts, enhance the safety of more victims, and hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable for their acts. But more needs to be done. From 1993 through 1998, on average, 22 percent of all female victims of violence were attacked by an intimate partner. The legislation approved by the Senate today will do more to help these women by reauthorizing critical VAWA grant programs; providing important protections for battered immigrant women; reauthorizing the domestic violence hotline, and helping state and tribal courts improve interstate enforcement of protection orders. It is especially fitting that Congress passed this crucial legislation in the month designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 15, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am deeply disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision today in *United States v. Morrison*. In this case, the Court struck down the civil remedy provision contained in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In 1994, as part of comprehensive crime control legislation, I signed into law the Violence Against Women Act. This historic piece of federal legislation contains a broad array of ground-breaking laws to combat violence against women. VAWA passed Congress with bipartisan support.

The Supreme Court's decision today does not affect the viability of VAWA as a whole. It does not affect any of the VAWA grant programs nor does it affect federal criminal provisions that punish interstate domestic violence and stalking crimes. The Supreme Court did, however, invalidate one important provision of the Violence Against Women Act that gave victims of gender-motivated violence the ability to sue their attackers for lost earnings, medical expenses, and other damages. Because I continue to believe that there should be remedies for victims of gender-motivated violence, we plan to study the Supreme Court's decision in *Morrison* to determine the best means to help these victims.

VAWA has provided funds to communities across the nation to address the tragedy of violence against women. These funds have made a crucial difference in women's lives. Unfortunately, VAWA funding is only authorized until the end of fiscal year 2000. I have made the reauthorization and strengthening of VAWA a top legislative goal for this year. If we work together, we can enact a bill that will keep women in this country safe from violence.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 6, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I applaud the House of Representatives for passing vital legislation today to combat trafficking in humans and strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The Trafficking Victims Protection Act will provide important new tools in the campaign to combat trafficking, a modern form of slavery and an insidious human rights abuse. VAWA, which expired on September 30, has significantly improved the lives of thousands of women who are victims of domestic violence, and has assisted state, local, and tribal law enforcement to combat domestic violence and sexual assault. It is imperative that this law be reauthorized this year, and I urge the Senate to pass this legislation without delay.

30-30-30

TALKING IT OVER

Hillary Rodham Clinton

October 16, 2000

For nearly eight years, this administration has worked to bring peace to some of the most troubled spots in the world -- from Northern Ireland to the Balkans, Africa and the Middle East. But it is hard for us to make peace around the world unless we first commit ourselves to make peace within our own homes.

That is why it is critical that the Senate vote this week to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

Congress first passed VAWA in 1994. Part of the President's crime bill, this landmark legislation improved the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, and provided critical services to victims. Since its passage, VAWA has made a difference in the lives of countless women and children. Between 1993 and 1998 alone, violent attacks on women by an intimate partner declined 21 percent.

Under VAWA, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services have awarded over \$1.6 billion in grants nationwide -- grants that support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, courts, victims' advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs. In addition, VAWA has established a domestic violence hotline that has received half a million calls.

Although tremendous strides have been made, domestic violence still devastates the lives of too many women and children each year. These statistics tell the story in stark detail:

Each year, nearly 900,000 women are victims of violence at the hands of an intimate partner.

Domestic violence is the No. 1 health risk for American women between the ages of 15-44.

Close to one-third of women murdered each year are killed by an intimate partner.

This week, the President traveled to New Mexico, where he visited the Genoveva Chavez Community Center in Santa Fe, N.M., and called on

members of Congress to reauthorize VAWA, which is due to expire on Sept. 30. If Congress fails to reauthorize this landmark bill, critical programs will be jeopardized.

Reauthorization will allow the continued maintenance and expansion of the domestic violence hotline, as well as shelter, rape prevention and education programs. It will expand the investigation and prosecution of violent crimes against women, provide assistance to a greater number of victims, and support effective partnerships between law enforcement, victims' advocates and communities.

While in New Mexico, the President announced \$1.7 million in new VAWA grants that will be used by state officials to combat domestic violence, especially among Native American women. Among the programs that will benefit from the funding: El Refugio, Inc., a legal services center that trains law enforcement staff to respond to domestic violence issues and represents victims who desperately need legal assistance.

The Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc., provides services to the eight local pueblos, as well as supporting legal services for victims and improved collaboration among social services, tribal police departments, prosecutors, courts and the PeaceKeepers Domestic Violence Program. Morning Star House, a community-based advocacy program for women and children in Albuquerque, N.M., is working to identify a network of safe houses for native women and children and to develop a plan for a permanent shelter.

VAWA funding has also supported the work of Connie Trujillo, who, for 20 years, has been the executive director of the Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families, one of the oldest battered women's shelters in the country. Connie, herself, is a survivor of domestic violence. Her former husband killed one child, and caused her to miscarry another. Since its founding in 1976, Esperanza has served as a safe haven for over 36,000 women and children, providing crisis intervention, counseling, educational activities for children, medical referrals, legal advocacy and assistance in finding transitional housing.

As I was writing this column, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to reauthorize VAWA, taking a step toward a brighter future for programs like those I've described. Although the 415-3 vote is proof positive that there is broad bipartisan support for the legislation, the Republican leadership in the Senate has been curiously reluctant to schedule a clean vote. Today, I hope that the spirit of bipartisanship -- the willingness to put the public good over party politics -- will prevail, and that the Senate, too, will be afforded the opportunity to vote on and pass this critically important bill.

When Bill and I lived in Arkansas, our house was close to the local domestic violence shelter in Little Rock, Ark. There, I spent many hours talking to the

women and children, listening to their stories and trying to help them get the resources they so desperately needed.

It must be clear to everyone that domestic violence is a crime that affects not just its immediate victims, but all of us. It increases health costs, keeps adults from work and children from school. It destroys families, relationships and lives, and robs our children of their right to be children.

It's time for the Senate leadership to schedule a vote on VAWA. We cannot turn our backs on millions of women and children. We cannot let them face the nightmare of violence alone.