



**New York City Alliance
Against Sexual Assault**

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**New York State Budget Victory for Rape Crisis Programs Includes Additional
\$4.6 million to Allow to Address an Increasing Volume of Sexual Assault**

[New York] The New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault (“the Alliance”) is pleased to announce the increased funding for 76 Rape Crisis Programs (RCPs) in the amount of \$4.6 million from New York State for the upcoming fiscal year (FY2015-16). This confirmed additional funding will enable RCPs to further address an increasing volume of calls for assistance from survivors of sexual violence and maintain 24/7 services such as; hotlines, counseling, advocacy and support groups.

Over the recent years, the volume of work for RCPs has been increased by 65 percent yet state funding has not reflected to effectively respond to the increasing demand for vital services. Furthermore, this funding came at a perfect time as many prevention programs were slated to close as of March 31, 2015. With these funds, we will strive to keep as many of these programs operating as possible.

Sexual violence is a serious public health, public safety and human rights issue of epidemic proportions. According to a national, scientific study by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), one in 5 women, and 1 in 71 men, have been raped in their lifetime. Among women, sexual assault is more prevalent than smoking in the United States. Despite of the prevalence of this crime and perseverance of advocates over the last 30 years, sexual assault is one of the most under reported crimes in the U.S - two out of three sexual assaults are not reported to police. Especially, with 11 colleges in New York being under of Federal investigation for violations of Title IX, it is clear there should be support to create the better infrastructure and existing expert resources to respond.

Mary Haviland, Executive Director states “I am ecstatic that the Governor and the NYS State Legislature rallied to increase the necessary funds to the rape crisis centers in the 2015-16 budget,” “Not only will it help respond to sexual assault, the funding will allow prevention programs to continue. With the previous proposed budget, many prevention programs were slated to close March 31st.” “The Alliance is deeply grateful to both leaderships in Assembly and Senate. We thank Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal for her continued leadership on this issue and for the hours that she spent working with leaders from the field to address the funding

challenges of this crucial network of services for survivors of sexual violence.” “We also thank the Senator Catherine Young for her continued support and leadership to work on increasing the budget for rape crisis programs. “The Alliance would also like to thank Alphonso B. David, Deputy Secretary for Civil Rights for his time and efforts to work with the group over the last few months to help identify the gaps in services”.

Assembly Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF-Manhattan) said, "New York's 76 rape crisis centers are on the front lines in the battle being waged every day against sexual assault". "RCPs provide life-saving services to survivors of sexual assault as well as critical prevention, education and training. The \$6.48 million, nearly double the funding appropriated last year, in the FY 2015-16 budget is a product of months of intense work with advocates to ensure that state funding levels recognize the scope of the problem and the herculean efforts of the RCPs."

“Rape crisis centers statewide have proven themselves as valuable resources for services and support for survivors of rape and sexual assault. A significant loss in funding would have crippled the centers, forcing them to lay off staff and dramatically scale back a range of proven programs. With the funding secured in this year’s budget, we can feel confident that no crisis centers will need to be closed and survivors of rape and sexual assault will continue to receive the funding they need and deserve,” said Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- Olean).

Lastly, the Alliance would like to acknowledge the Funding Working Group whose tireless leadership led to this victory. Mary Haviland states “their persistence and dedication to serving survivors of sexual violence and ending sexual violence even under the one of the most challenging funding climate is truly inspiring.” The RCP Funding Working Group includes Joanne Zannoni, Executive Director from the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Susan Xenarios, LCSW, Director of Mount Sinai St. Luke's Roosevelt Crime Victims Treatment Center, Lindsey Crusan, Director of Sexual Assault and Crime Victims Assistance Program for Rensselaer County at Samaritan Hospital, a member of St. Peter's Health Partners, Randi K. Bregman, LMSW, Executive Director of Vera House, Inc., Michael Polenberg, Vice President, Government Affairs of Safe Horizon, and Rachel Gregory, Prevention Education Coordinator at Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes, Inc. The Working Group will continue to advocate for the recurring funding for the network beyond the FY2015-16.

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