

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 16, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Minority Leader,

As the bipartisan co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, we are committed to improving the lives of women and families. One bipartisan issue that the Caucus has always supported is the need to end and address gender-based violence by supporting the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Since VAWA was first passed in 1994, serious victimization by an intimate partner declined by 72 percent for women and 64 percent for men. However, it is estimated that as many as 45 million adults experience physical violence, rape and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lives, and as recent media reports about sexual violence have detailed, this is an ongoing fight. In addition to the emotional toll, this issue has great economic impacts for our country. Recent studies report the financial cost of rape to be more than \$120,000 per victim with more than half of that cost coming from lost workforce productivity. We believe it is critical to invest in increased prevention services in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, scheduled to expire at the end of this fiscal year, so we can ultimately stop this cycle of violence before it begins.

With this in mind, we urge you to support increased funding for the following programs:

1. Rape Prevention & Education (RPE) formula grants.

Administered by the CDC Injury Center, RPE grants provide essential funding to states and territories to support rape prevention and education programs conducted by rape crisis centers, state sexual assault coalitions, and other public and private nonprofit entities. A 2017 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence revealed that almost 40 percent of programs had a waiting list of a month or more for prevention programming.

2. VAWA Consolidated Grant Program to Address Youth and Children Experiencing Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies

There is growing evidence that prevention education that engages men and boys as allies and promotes healthy relationships is key to reducing gender-based violence. Increased funding will provide programs with the resources they need to increase the depth and reach of these critical programs.

3. Workplaces Respond to Domestic and Sexual Violence: A National Resource Center

Started in 2009, this National Resource Center helps employers, employees, and workplace stakeholders by providing tools, resources, and training to prevent and respond to harassment and violence impacting the workplace. The National Resource Center recently released new how-to guides, prevention and response protocols, and specialized model trainings to help improve responses to and prevent workplace sexual harassment and violence.

Thank you for your leadership and past support of the Violence Against Women Act, and we ask you to prioritize preventing intimate partner violence in the reauthorization of VAWA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan W. Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Susan W. Brooks

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lois Frankel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Lois Frankel