

May 7, 2012

Honorable Lamar Smith
Chair
Committee on the Judiciary
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Opposition to HR 4970's Provisions That Jeopardize Community Safety by Helping Perpetrators of Crimes Against Immigrant Victims Avoid Prosecution

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Conyers:

We are law enforcement officials across the country who have signed this letter to express our strong opposition to provisions contained in the HR 4970 Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization that Representative Adams has introduced. Several of the provisions in HR 4970 eliminate longstanding protections for immigrant victims of domestic violence, child abuse, rape and sexual assault which will undermine our work as police officers in successfully apprehending criminals.

Some key components of effective policing will be jeopardized by these proposed provisions. Police departments depend on information gained from the community, including victims of crime. Several provisions in this bill diminish the safety of the victim and this in turn will cause such individual to be less likely to report domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and other crimes. The police have worked very hard to build trust between themselves and the communities they protect, especially immigrant communities. We need the community to be involved in order to keep the community safe. We need the eyes and ears of everybody to participate. If victims don't feel safe reporting, they will not identify perpetrators. And for every crime of domestic violence, child abuse, rape, sexual assault, or trafficking that goes unreported, there is one more serious criminal not being apprehended.

If this bill is passed, it will turn back the clock on over seventeen years' of progress made by law enforcement in reducing violence against women and children in our communities because it will discourage immigrant victims from coming forward. We urge you to consider these issues and we have identified our most significant concerns below:

- 1. The Senate VAWA Reauthorization allows the Department of Homeland Security to recapture unused visas from past years and increase the numbers of U-visas that could be issued each year by 5,000.**

This vital provision is missing from HR 4970. When the fear of deportation and exploitation is reduced, immigrant crime victims feel safe identifying violent criminal offenders. The U-visa cap of 10,000 was reached in September of 2011. When the number of requests for certifications exceeds the cap of 10,000, immigrant crime victims are forced to wait. Waiting can be dangerous. The delay provides violent criminal offenders, and the friends and families of

violent criminal offenders, with the opportunity to use physical violence and death threats to convince crime victims not to testify. When criminals have additional time to terrorize crime victims and convince them not to participate in a criminal investigation or prosecution, more and more violent offenders go free.

We strongly urge an increase in the number of U-visa's granted on an annual basis so that more violent criminal offenders can be arrested and held accountable. Law enforcement will identify and investigate 10,000 more criminals a year if the cap on U-visas is increased leading to more prosecutions and ultimately more convictions.

2. The proposed bill would dismantle the centralized VAWA unit at the DHS Vermont Service Center and would require that all VAWA, T and U-visa cases be adjudicated by local DHS officers across the country, many of whom are untrained.

Centralized domestic violence and sexual assault units staffed by specially trained officials have long been recognized by law enforcement, prosecutors and courts as the best practice model for detecting, investigating, and prosecuting domestic violence and sexual assault crimes. Officers working in domestic violence and sexual assault units receive the training and gain experience crucial to our Department's ability to protect victims and hold offenders accountable in spite of the perpetrator's efforts to manipulate victims, officers, and witnesses to escape prosecution. Specialized domestic violence and sexual assault units were created to provide police departments with the expertise needed to arrest, investigate, prosecute and convict perpetrators. Prior to the creation of these units, which included years of training for law enforcement, perpetrators of domestic violence were very effective eluding prosecution. They did this by minimizing their crimes, blaming the victim, and convincing untrained officers to not arrest them or worse, to arrest the victim instead. Over the years we have learned that recognizing patterns of abuser behavior is key to stopping domestic violence in our communities. Lethality increases when perpetrators are not identified and arrested. As a result victims, their children and police officers are killed by domestic violence perpetrators.

By creating, staffing and training the centralized VAWA unit at the Vermont Service Center, the Department of Homeland Security has followed the lead of law enforcement and prosecutors' offices across the country. The VAWA Unit has well trained individuals with the training and expertise needed of government officials to make credible determinations in violence against women cases. These trained adjudicators have the expertise, sensitivity and resources needed to offer protection to crime victims and to identify fraud. Officials working in specialized units are experienced and can see patterns in cases, easily identifying false reports. Specialized units (*I.e., robbery, homicide, juveniles*) become experts at seeing, and visualizing a situation. They are trained to make decisions with a subset of information and are able to decipher if a fraud or lies exist.

3. The proposed bill would allow DHS adjudicators to interview the perpetrator and inform the perpetrator about the victim's case.

The first rule and standard police protocol of an officer in a domestic violence case is to separate the victim and suspect. Established safe rooms exist at police stations and court houses for victims because physical proximity away from perpetrator reduces both physical and visual

access and it is extremely important in allowing the victim to openly tell the story. Just one glance from a perpetrator can scare a victim into silence, we know this from experience.

Informing the perpetrator of the victim's case gives the perpetrator additional power and control and creates a strong disincentive for the victim to come forward. It instills fear in the victim and subjects the victim and the victim's family to possible threats and retaliation from the perpetrator. The power then transfers back to the hands of the perpetrator. The danger is particularly acute when the victim is still residing with the perpetrator. Recognizing this danger, VAWA's self-petitioning, U and T visa application process and VAWA confidentiality protections were specifically designed so that victims could file for immigration relief and receive approval while the victim continued to reside and/or work for the perpetrator. Once the victim's case is approved and she receives work authorization, the victim is then able to leave the perpetrator and support herself and her children.

The safety of the victim and the law enforcement officers is critical. Advocates work hard with victims to establish a safety plan that helps victims plan the steps they will take to keep themselves and their children safe when violence occurs in the future. When the victim no longer has a safe place to report information, the victim does not come forward with information.

HR 4970's authorization of local DHS officials to interview both the victim and the perpetrator at the same time is counter-intuitive to long established law enforcement protocols and procedures in domestic violence and sexual assault investigations. This bill contains provisions that remove protections accorded to U.S. citizens; with this bill, such protections are denied to immigrant victims.

- 4. The proposed bill links adjudication by DHS adjudicators to the status of a domestic violence investigation or prosecution by permitting/requiring a number of factors to be considered: a) for a VAWA self-petitioner, whether the police or prosecutors failed to investigate or prosecute the case, (b) with respect to a U-Visa, whether the criminal activity is "actively" under investigation or prosecution has commenced and if no investigation or prosecution is being pursued, the bill uses that fact against the immigrant victim and (c) for the VAWA self-petition, it may not be adjudicated until after the investigation or prosecution is completed.**

The problem with linking the adjudication of VAWA self-petitions and U-visas to the status of an investigation or prosecution is that there can be a myriad of reasons why law enforcement and prosecution officials may decide not to investigate or prosecute a case (I.e. lack of time or resources, the perpetrator is eluding arrest or dead, the prosecutors need more information, etc.) and there is no connection between those reasons and the merits of a victim's claim. Lack of resources is a key issue and unfortunately, prosecutors cannot keep up with the large case load. They then resort to triaging of cases and as a result, end up focusing on repeat offenders or very violent criminals solely.

From an enforcement perspective, the ability to make an arrest is a critical way to hold the perpetrator accountable. Taking reports, opening investigations and making arrests are deterrents to perpetrators even if there is no prosecution. Police are experts at interviewing people who report crime, determining whether someone has been a crime victim and deciphering

whether someone they are interviewing is a perpetrator. Through these practices our agencies and law enforcement agencies across the country have reduced domestic violence in our communities, dramatically improving the safety of victims, the community and officers.

Last, victims cannot control how long an investigation or prosecution takes and should not be penalized if an investigation or prosecution is still ongoing.

5. This proposed bill requires that all victims report a crime to law enforcement within 60- days.

Domestic violence often occurs to a victim 7-8 times before law enforcement officers are called for help. Usually domestic violence is not one isolated incident but an ongoing pattern. Sometimes victims do not realize it is occurring, and sometimes they do not realize it is against the law in this country. The victims are isolated and often do not have a support network. Victims often fear for their life.

Placing a sixty day reporting limit on domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, trafficking, child abuse and other violent crimes will only serve to cut off law enforcement's ability to arrest perpetrators. This is not enough time for a victim.

The requirement that victims report within 60 days will be particularly problematic for immigrant rape and sexual assault victims. Immigrant victims of rape and sexual assault committed against them at work find it exceptionally difficult to report sexual violence because doing so will lead to losing their jobs and not being able to support their children. The 60 day requirement will result in more cases like the following:

A woman working in a bakery was sexually assaulted by a coworker on site. More than 60 days after the rape, the victim reported the crime to law enforcement. The police informed the victim about the U-visa; she received certification and filed for a U-visa. Law enforcement contacted the bakery, but the perpetrator was able to flee and disappear without any recourse. Since U-visa applicants do not receive work authorization until after their application has been fully adjudicated and approved, it was impossible for the victim to leave her employment at the bakery. A new employee was hired in place of the perpetrator who fled, and he sexually assaulted the victim. Although the second perpetrator was arrested and convicted, the second act of violence could have been prevented by access to early work authorization for U-visa victims. However, if HR 4970 becomes law, neither of the rapists in this case would have been arrested or convicted.

There are many reasons that victims delay reporting violent crimes against them. Victims may not be emotionally ready to report it to the police. The victim may be afraid and in hiding, may fear deportation or the perpetrator could be an extremely violent offender and the victim fears him immensely. The perpetrator may threaten to kill the victim and/or her children and family members if the victim reports the crime(s) to the police. There could be cultural reasons at play. Sometimes it can take months and months before a victim comes forward. Whatever the reason and despite the delay in reporting, law enforcement officials are trained and well equipped to evaluate the credibility and veracity of the victim's story. Placing time limits on

reporting is bad practice that strengthens the ability of perpetrators to elude arrest, criminal investigation and prosecution.

There are too many offenders that know the fear immigrants have of reporting crime, and this 60 day limitation will give more power to offenders and provide them with an incentive to use threats and intimidation against victims to keep victims from reporting crimes within the 60 day time frame.

Furthermore, there can be a language barrier. When limited English proficient victims call the police for help, the victim's ability to report the crime and receive help from the police can be inhibited when police departments have not established policies and protocols to provide the victim with a qualified interpreter. Today, many police departments still lack the types of language access programs and protocols required by federal law. As a result, limited English proficiency can lead to a victim's failure to make a report within 60 days when the cause is actually the failure of the police department to provide qualified interpreters.

It makes no sense, from a criminal justice perspective, to distinguish between the protections against domestic violence and sexual assault that we, as a society and community, offer crime victims based on the victim's citizenship or immigration status. When a victim finally finds his/her voice and the courage to report violent crime it is our job to listen to them and the 60-day requirement essentially handcuffs the process.

Additionally, the U-visa facilitates collaboration between law enforcement officials and other state and federal agencies in cases of rape and sexual assault. Only 10% of English speaking rape victims report rape to the police. Limited English proficient and undocumented victims are even less likely to report rape to the police. Despite this fact, federal government investigators at the EEOC have been successful in winning and settling civil enforcement actions against employers for egregious sexual assault, rape and trafficking even when these crimes may not have been reported to police. (See case list and court orders attached.) HR 4970 will limit the EEOC's ability to prevent sexual assault and rape of immigrant women in the workplace to cases in which the rape is reported to the police within 60 day timeframe.

Lastly, a significant number of immigrants that are victims of crime often do not report those crimes to law enforcement because of overwhelming fear, lack of trust, threat of physical harm to self and/or children, threat of deportation, and threat of losing custody of children. We are very concerned about the provisions contained in HR4970 will provide perpetrators information about the existence of and an ability to play a role in the victim's immigration case.

6. This proposed bill requires victims to report the criminal activity before expiration of the statute of limitation.

Police departments are all about information. Even if a crime occurred years ago, the information is still of great use to the police. There may be a serial criminal involved or a pattern of criminal behavior. As our experience has shown, many of these perpetrators are career

criminals. Few domestic violence and sexual assault perpetrators come to police attention the first time they commit such a crime.

Further, the strongest predictors of future acts of crime are past behavior. Every report to police builds upon the evidence law enforcement collects. Our success in policing relies on knowing who is doing what in a community. The United States Department of Justice through the COPS Office grants has invested significant resources in promoting community policing. At the core of community policing success are two principles – 1) building trust and 2) getting to know and building relationships with the community. The U-visa has been an important tool that dramatically improves police and community safety in jurisdictions across the country. Laws like the one proposed in HR 4970 which cut off help to victims who may possess key pieces of information we need to make the case against a serial criminal perpetrator. That is why we work hard to build relationships with communities through community policing and encourage victims to report crimes without regard to whether the statute of limitations has run on the particular criminal incident the victim is reporting

In addition, for cold cases, as we've seen in rape cases, with thousands and thousands of DNA samples, some cold cases are now being solved based on new information provided by victims whose crimes happened long ago.

Current VAWA self-petitioning and U-visa protections work to protect immigrant victims, save police officers lives and reduce crimes in communities across the country by making arrests, criminal investigations, and prosecuting perpetrators for crimes against immigrant victims. Officers nationwide report how useful VAWA self-petitioning and the U-visa have been as crime fighting tools.

An officer from a D.C. Metro area law enforcement agency described an experience he had working with an undocumented immigrant victim of domestic violence and sexual assault. The officer worked with the victim through the initial stage of the U-visa process. The officer was able to develop a level of trust with the victim, a trust that led the victim to voluntarily tell the officer that several gang members had offered a reward for his murder. The trust between the victim and the officer inevitably saved the officer's life.

Building trust with immigrant domestic violence victims, whom have received approvals in VAWA self-petitioning and U-visa, leads to crime solving that can go beyond the initial domestic violence incident. This can be critical in bringing down various infiltrating crime rings such as drugs and human trafficking within our communities.

7. This proposed bill requires the victim of the crime to have information regarding the identity of the perpetrator or for the identity of the perpetrator to be known.

Identifying criminal perpetrators, particularly in the context of sexual assault, rape, felonious assault, murder, kidnapping and other stranger perpetrated crimes can be one of law enforcements' most difficult tasks. Our success in identifying criminals perpetrating crimes in our communities depends on receiving as many tips and as much information as we can from as many sources as possible. There are many instances in which crimes occur but the victim is unable to identify the perpetrator. Often small pieces of information can be helpful even if

initially it does not seem so. Such information may provide the missing puzzle piece that together with other evidence may lead to identifying the perpetrator. Denying immigrant crime victims access to U-visa protections because they cannot specifically identify the perpetrator cuts off our ability as law enforcement officials to solve these crimes.

The goals of community policing, VAWA and the U-visa are to encourage crime victims to come forward and openly share information with law enforcement. This identification requirement, particularly combined with the other provisions of this bill that severely hamper our ability to fight crime because the victims of the crime are non-citizens, makes no sense from a criminal justice perspective. It undermines our work and robs us of the tools we need to do our jobs.

8. This proposed bill would eliminate the opportunity for U-visa victims to become legal permanent residents.

Victims will be less likely to come forward if they are at risk of deportation after 4 years. Immigrant victims are a fearful group of people and feel very vulnerable. The opportunity for U-Visa victims to become legal permanent residents is a tool that encourages them to come forward to the police and identify perpetrators of domestic violence.

The ability to provide protection against the threat of deportation to immigrant crime victims who find the courage to cooperate with law enforcement and prosecutors at great danger to themselves and their families has been a cornerstone of the U-visas success as a crime fighting tool in our communities. Without the protection from deportation and the ability to offer lawful permanent residency, crimes perpetrated against immigrants in our communities would go unsolved. Immigrant victims of sexual assault perpetrated in workplaces and immigrant victims of domestic violence have been subjected to years of threats of retaliation through deportation by perpetrators to keep victims vulnerable to crimes and prevent crimes from being reported. The removal of access to lawful permanent residency that this bill proposes would eliminate U-visa victim protections and take away the U-visa as an important law enforcement tool.

If the U-visa becomes a temporary 4 year visa after which the victim must leave the United States or be deported, victims will not risk the increased danger to themselves and their children to come forward and work with law enforcement to prosecute criminals. If victims do come forward under the proposed law changes, this is what will happen to them: They will report the crime and work with law enforcement to prosecute the perpetrator. If the perpetrator is convicted and deported, or only deported, he will be removed from the United States and lie in wait to retaliate against the victim knowing that in 4 years she too will be deported and he can take his revenge. The cost to the victim and her family is too high. With the proposed changes, victims will choose to not report the crime and stay in the United States and suffer escalating violence in communities where the police will be there if they call for help.

Individual Restrictions Placed on U-Visas and VAWA Self-Petitioning Will Harm Victims and Prevent Successful Prosecution of Criminals

The following story could not have been possible if the amendments proposed in HR 4970 became law. This is the story of Eva who was in a dating relationship that turned violent.

Eva filed 10 different police reports about the abuse that was occurring. Due to a significant language barrier and issues in law enforcement’s information protocol, first responders were led to believe the reports were only incidents of stalking. On several occasions, responding officers even confused the victim’s name and the perpetrator’s name. Although law enforcement followed up with Eva, she often was working and they could only leave voicemails instead of talking to her directly. As a result of her limited English, Eva would receive messages but did not understand where to go or whom to contact. Significant miscommunication would lead her to the main station instead of contacting the specific unit that truly addressed her case. Officers told her they had not obtained records of her previous reports. She felt that she was going crazy. The overall experience severely weakened her trust within her local police department.

When the police later provided an interpreter for Eva, the dynamics of the case began to shift immensely. Over the course of three interviews, she revealed a lot of vital information to law enforcement. She described a particular violent incident when a stranger, “Juan,” came to her aid. After Juan witnessed the perpetrator hit Eva, the perpetrator fled. When Juan approached the officers on the scene, they coldly denied his help. Juan only provided his first name and the name of the hotel where he was staying. Officers were able to reach the witness and corroborate Eva’s story. Juan’s statement not only substantiated Eva’s story, but also encouraged her confidence in law enforcement. Only after many interviews with police did Eva feel comfortable enough to reveal a sexual assault that had occurred in addition to her abuse. Over time, she had come to trust the police officer she was working with. It was a story she had kept to herself because of immense shame, self-blame, and isolation.

As the case progressed, the perpetrator fled the jurisdiction. Nonetheless, he continued to emotionally manipulate and intimidate Eva through phone calls. Although Eva approached her landlord and expressed her fear about the perpetrator coming for her, the landlord was reluctant to add further security measures. The lack of security in her building made it difficult for Eva to feel safe. The police eventually helped her to have the locks changed.

The perpetrator was later seized and deported, yet later was caught trying to return to the country through Arizona. He managed to send Eva a threatening letter, alerting her that he was back in the United States. For Eva, fear was constantly present. During this time, Eva had two U-visa applications in an indeterminate state. Although the perpetrator violated court orders 33 times, the defense maintained that Eva was trying to take advantage of the U-visa process, and received a certification to complete her applications. Furthermore, the defense argued that the two narratives in Eva’s applications weakened her overall credibility. In her case, for the first time, we testified on behalf of Eva that she was eligible for a U-visa certification, if even solely because she had been extremely helpful when filing the police reports.

Ultimately, the perpetrator was convicted for stalking. However, he was not convicted for sexual assault because the victim had waited too long to report the violence. After Eva obtained her U-visa it changed her life. That fact that he was not found guilty on the sexual assault no longer mattered; what mattered was that we believed and fought for her. She actually had the courage to come forward and build a relationship with the police and the District Attorney’s office. She still calls the officer to let him know how her life is better.

* * * * *

Let us underscore that behind 10,000 U-Visas issued to immigrant victims are 10,000 criminals who have been identified and investigated. And perpetrators of domestic violence often go on to committing more serious crimes. It is critical that immigrant victims feel safe to cooperate with the police and come forward and report crime.

The availability of the VAWA self-petition and U-Visa to domestic violence victims has led to significant improvements in the lives of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, rape and trafficking survivors. We do not want to back-track and to lose the progress we gained through the U-visa and years of community policing. We urge you to reject Representative Adams' bill.

Sincerely,

Chief Pete Helein, Appleton Wisconsin Police Department

Captain, Maria Alvarenga Watkins, (Retired) Metropolitan Police Department,
Washington D.C. (San Antonio, Texas)

Sergeant Inspector, Antonio Flores, San Francisco Police Department California

Officer Michael LaRiviere, Salem Police Department, Massachusetts

Detective Shelli Sonnenberg, Boise Police Department, Idaho

Detective Stacey Ivie, Alexandria Virginia Police Department

Rhonda Giger, Prosecutor - City of Bothell, WA

Marcus Bruning - Supervising Deputy Sheriff for St. Louis County Sheriff's Office

Lt. Carole Germano - Danvers, MA PD

Det. Sgt. Robert Mahoney - Peabody, MA PD

Brian Kyes - Chief of Police - Chelsea Police Department

Appendix Biographies

Chief Pete Helein of the Appleton Police Department in Wisconsin. He has more than 28 years of law enforcement experience with the Appleton Police Department serving as a Patrol Officer, Police School Liaison Officer, Resource Development Unit Specialist, Accreditation Manager, Operations Supervisor, Commander of the Northern Police District, Commander of the Detective Bureau, Commander of the Downtown and Southern Districts and Deputy Chief of Operations.

Helein was a past recipient of the State of Wisconsin Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award. He served on the Department's SWAT team for 15 years as a general member, team leader, assistant commander, and ultimately as the commander of the Team. He currently serves on Wisconsin's Governor's Council on Domestic Violence. Helein received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Northern Michigan University and a Master of Science Degree from Eastern Kentucky University.

Helein is a consultant for the National Center on Protection Orders and Full Faith & Credit. He worked on the Prosper Project and the Promising Practices Initiative where he was responsible for working with a team of consultants to evaluate the policies and practices of law enforcement agencies throughout the United States.

Chief Helein has conducted an extensive amount of training throughout the United States on Victims' Rights, Domestic Violence, and Community Policing. He represented the Appleton Police Department in an alliance with the Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs and the Wisconsin Department of Justice to implement strategies that were developed to integrate the philosophy of community policing to meet the needs of domestic abuse victims. Helein traveled to Kurgan, Russia to lead a training team that was awarded an International Domestic Violence Prevention Training Program Grant by Sister Cities International. The training initiative focused on establishing a domestic abuse shelter, the creation of multi-specialty work groups, and promoting violence prevention and awareness.

Helein served on Wisconsin's Crime Victim Council for more than 12 years. As Chairman of the Council, he worked with a dedicated team to develop and introduce a comprehensive victims' rights legislative package, Assembly Bill 342, to support Wisconsin's Constitutional Amendment for crime victims.

Maria Alvarenga-Watkins retired from the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, where she worked for over 20 years and retired at the rank of Captain. Throughout her career in the Department, she was assigned to various units and responsibilities to include patrol, vice, investigations, internal affairs, community services, and many others. Since retiring, one of her enjoyments in life is to be able to be a volunteer at church and her community, especially as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) with CASA of Central Texas. She received the "Jane Quentan Piper Volunteer Advocate of the Year" award for the State of Texas in 2005. Ms. Alvarenga-Watkins has most recently served on the board of the National Network to End Violence Against Immigrant Women and ASISTA. She serves on the board of the Wing Society for CASA of Central Texas. She conducts trainings and workshops on issues of Law Enforcement and the Immigrant community; specifically, the U-visa provisions for undocumented victims of crimes, understanding this law, the application of it by law enforcement, and networking between advocates and law enforcement agencies. Ms. Alvarenga-Watkins earned her BA degree in Administration of Justice from the University of the District of Columbia and a certificate in Public Management from George Washington University. She now resides in San Antonio, Texas.

Sergeant/Inspector Antonio Flores became a member of the San Francisco Police Department in 1982, and now has over 27 years of experience as a sworn law enforcement professional. The early years of his career included training at Central Station and completing his probationary period at Richmond Station. He was then assigned to Mission Station, where he began to utilize his Spanish language skills on-duty. In 1984 he took on a 90-day undercover assignment with the Narcotics Division in areas plagued by narcotics trafficking.

Sergeant/Inspector Flores was re-assigned to the Mission Station plain-clothes unit, which ultimately led to a permanent assignment to the Narcotics Division. His assignments over the next 13 years included Buy/Bust Operations, Buy/Walk Operations, Mid-level and Major Narcotics Trafficker Investigations, Lead Investigator Responsibilities, Assignment to the U.S. Customs Service-Money Laundering, Assignment to the F.B.I. Violent Gang Task Force, Expert Witness in Superior Court, and Guest Lecturer-Community Groups and Schools. In 1998 he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the Tenderloin District. Sergeant Flores was responsible for supervising officers and overseeing the Field Training Program. In addition, his role included community problem solving for issues such as homelessness, mental health, narcotics, and quality of life problems.

In 2001 Flores was promoted to Inspector and assigned to the Domestic Violence Response Unit, where he was responsible for overseeing cases. Sergeant/Inspector Flores has investigated over 1,000 cases involving domestic violence, stalking, and elder abuse. He also obtained search and arrest warrants and testifies in superior court (San Francisco, Marin and San Mateo Counties) on these cases. He is currently lecturing the domestic violence & elder abuse community regarding the SFPD-DVRU and cycle of violence, and training at SFPD-Police Academy (Continuing Professional Training-AO), emergency dispatchers/911 operators, and staff regarding stalking and elder abuse investigations.

Officer Michael LaRiviere has been a member of the Salem Police Department since 1989. His 23 years of service included 6 years as Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) included domestic violence investigations, policy/procedure development, and training. Michael's work as DVLO significantly changed the way domestic violence cases are investigated in Salem and surrounding communities. Officer Lariviere conducts trainings for law enforcement nationwide as one of the lead *Federal Law Enforcement Training Center FLETC certified* trainers on domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, violent crimes and is the lead FLETC certified trainer on the U-Visa and VAWA immigration relief. He trains law enforcement, prosecutors, medical, social services and legal professionals on violence against women issues. Michael is currently assigned to the Patrol Division where he continues to actively respond to and investigate crimes against victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and other violent crimes. Michael currently provides consultation and technical assistance nationally and has assisted in the development of training curriculums for local, state, national and military audiences. Officer LaRiviere earned his B.S. in Human Services at Springfield College. He has been honored with a community award from HAWC (Help for Abused Women and Their Children) for taking concrete steps to end domestic violence and in 2002 he was recognized by the Office on Violence Against Women for his extraordinary contribution to the prevention of domestic violence. Officer LaRiviere served as a member of the congressionally appointed Department of Defense Taskforce on Domestic Violence.

Detective Shelli Sonnenberg is with the Boise Police Department in Idaho she graduated cum laude from the University of Idaho in 1998, with a degree in Crime and Justice Studies/Sociology (Go Vandals!). Shelli began her law enforcement career with the Boise Police Department in 1999, at which time she was honored to be voted the first female President of her POST Academy. Shelli spent the first 4 years of her career working the same geographical area in patrol. In 2003, she joined the Community Policing Team, as a Neighborhood Contact Officer; she is currently the Community Outreach Officer and Refugee Liaison for the department.

Shelli works closely with the refugee resettlement agencies and community outreach groups in the area, providing educational and safety information to the New Americans when they arrive in Boise. She is a member of the Crisis Negotiation Team and a member of the Honor Guard.

In 2006, Detective Sonnenberg was chosen BPD Officer of the Year by her peers, something she considers to be a highlight of her career, thus far. In an attempt to assist her fellow officers in the field, Shelli teaches a refugee awareness class to all the new recruits and created, and is currently running, the Interpreter/Translator Program for the department. In March 2011, Detective Sonnenberg was awarded the first ever Refugee Champion Award by the Idaho Office for Refugees for her continued support of the refugee communities in Idaho.

Detective Stacey Ivie is with the Alexandria Police Department in Virginia. She is currently assigned to the Financial Crimes Unit. Prior to this assignment, she was a member of the Domestic Violence Unit. That unit was responsible for investigating all domestic violence related and stalking crimes that occurred in the City of Alexandria. She has been employed with the Alexandria Police Department for over nine years. She received her

M. Ed. from American Intercontinental University. She authored and bi-annually instructed an advanced Domestic Violence Investigations Course at the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy. She also guest lectures at various institutions on the topic of Domestic Violence. She volunteers as a Rape Aggression Defense Instructor. She was the creator of an informational brochure on Domestic Violence that is disseminated within Alexandria. In 2008, she received the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal from the Sons of the American Revolution for her work in the field of Domestic Violence.

Rhonda Giger Biography: Rhonda Giger graduated cum laude from Seattle University School of Law. Immediately after finishing law school, she began to work in the Domestic Violence Unit as a prosecutor for the City of Everett, Washington. After that she was the family violence prosecutor for Kent, Washington for three years before moving to Bothell, Washington. She has been with the City of Bothell for over ten years and is the lead prosecutor and legal advisor for the police department.

She has been an instructor at the Basic Law Enforcement Academy in Washington for twelve years, teaching Prosecution of Domestic Violence Cases, Lateral Equivalency Academy, and Courtroom Testimony. She has conducted numerous trainings throughout the nation for various police departments and law enforcement agencies with a focus on police liability and the appropriate application of both federal and local domestic violence laws.

Rhonda is also an instructor for the Domestic Violence Instructor Training Program put on by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glenco, Georgia; as well as an instructor for Rural Domestic Violence Trainings sponsored by the National Sheriff's Association. She is also a member of the advisory board for the local STOP grant.

She can be contacted at Rhonda.Giger@gmail.com.

Domestic Crisis Intervention: Instructor Biography for Marcus Bruning, M.Ed: Marcus Bruning has been a member of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office for seventeen years and currently serves as Supervising Deputy Sheriff. Marcus was involved in developing a model policy for the country in rural agency response to domestic violence through a Department of Justice Grant. Marcus has facilitated courses across the nation as a Contract Instructor for Praxis International, Minnesota Program Development Incorporated, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the National Sheriff's Association and the Gender Violence Institute on domestic violence and has been utilized as a subject expert nationally.

Marcus teaches certified police officer training courses in several states across the country focusing on advanced investigative techniques for domestic violence and sexual assault intervention. Marcus also presents nationally regarding intelligence led policing and effecting change within organizations. Marcus has a Masters of Education degree from The University of Minnesota, Duluth and is a member of American Mensa.