

# Friends of VAWA Coalition Calls on the House to Defeat the Substitute to S. 47 and Pass the Bipartisan Senate Bill

*Washington, D.C. – The 73 undersigned national organizations issued the following statement opposing the House Republican substitute for the bi-partisan Senate bill (S.47), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), that includes provisions to protect vulnerable communities, including Native American women, college students, and LGBT individuals:*

The House Republican Leadership's bill puts a barrier to the protection of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Conversely, the Senate version of VAWA, which was adopted with strong bipartisan support (78-22), addresses gaps in current service programs that left Native American women, college students, LGBT individuals, and other vulnerable groups without vital protections.

Today, House Republican Leadership will offer a substitute to the bipartisan Senate version of VAWA (S. 47), eliminating these important provisions and weakening the Office of Violence Against Women. These omissions deny critical services to many victims and reinforce the perception of the Republican Party as hostile to the needs of women, college students, LGBT persons, and communities of color. The House substitute:

- Limits the authority S. 47 provides to tribal authorities to prosecute non-tribal members who commit domestic violence or sexual assault crimes on tribal land. This makes it more difficult for Native American women to hold their abusers accountable. Native Americans are disproportionately affected by dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- Eliminates provisions of the Senate bill that would require colleges and universities to keep students safe and informed about policies on sexual assault and enhance programs that help to prevent and combat sexual violence on college campuses.
- Drops the anti-discrimination provisions from S. 47, which were designed to ensure that LGBT victims receive the services they need regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Studies have shown that LGBT individuals are victims of domestic and sexual violence at equal or greater levels than the rest of the population.

Even in today's polarized political climate, we should at least be able to agree that when we send our daughters and sons to college, they should be protected from stalking, date rape and sexual assault; that one-third of tribal women who have been the victims of rape or domestic abuse should have equal access to justice no matter who the perpetrator is; and, that domestic violence is still violence regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

**It is critical that Representatives reject the exclusionary substitute bill and support passage of the bipartisan Senate bill.** If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Zirkin, Executive Vice-President, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at 202-263-2880 [zirkin@civilrights.org](mailto:zirkin@civilrights.org) or Sakira Cook, Senior Policy Associate, The Leadership Conference on

Civil and Human Rights, at 202-263-2894 or [cook@civilrights.org](mailto:cook@civilrights.org) or Norma Gattsek, Director of Government Relations, Feminist Majority at [ngattsek@feminist.org](mailto:ngattsek@feminist.org) or 703-522-2214.

AFL-CIO

African American Ministers in Action (AAMA)

Alaska Federation of Natives

American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA)

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

Black Women's Health Imperative

Break the Cycle

Casa de Esperanza: National Latino Network for Healthy Families and Communities

Catholics for Choice

Center for Reproductive Rights

Coalition of Labor Union Women

Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO

Community Action Partnership

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)

Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice

Enterprising and Professional Women - USA

Equal Justice Society

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO)

Feminist Majority

GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality

GlobalSolutions.org

Human Rights Campaign

Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.

International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)

International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women

International Union, UAW

Lawyers' Committee For Civil Rights Under Law

Media Equity Collaborative

Methodist Federation for Social Action

Metropolitan Community Churches

Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

National Association of Social Workers

National Black Justice Coalition

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs

National Congress of American Indians

National Council of Jewish Women

National Council on Independent Living

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Legal Aid and Defender Association  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Women's Law Center  
People For the American Way  
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law  
Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc.  
The National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.  
The Religious Institute  
The United Methodist Church, General Board of Church & Society  
Ultra Violet  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
United Methodist Women  
US Human Rights Network  
US National Committee for UN Women  
V-Day  
WestCare Foundation  
Wider Opportunities for Women  
Women Enabled, Inc.  
Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)  
Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, U.S. Section  
Women's Law Project  
YWCA USA

