



February 25, 2013

**VOTE NO on House Substitute for S.47
It Fails to Protect All Victims of Domestic Violence**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 210 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we urge you to oppose the House substitute for S.47, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), because it fails to protect all victims of domestic violence. The Leadership Conference strongly believes that protecting all who suffer domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking is a fundamental civil and human right, and therefore we intend to score this vote in our Congressional Voting Record for the 113th Congress.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which was adopted in the Senate with strong bipartisan support (78-22), addresses gaps in current service programs that left lesbian, gay, and transgender people, Native American women, and other underserved and vulnerable groups without vital services or protections. The need to address these gaps has been recognized by law enforcement officers, victim service providers, and health care professionals. While government reports document that the annual incidence of domestic violence has decreased by 63 percent, it is still unacceptable that in the United States 24 people become victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States every minute.

Yet the House substitute for S.47 eliminates important provisions in the bipartisan Senate bill, thereby denying services to many victims of domestic violence. Despite the well-documented unacceptably high rates of domestic violence on tribal lands, the House substitute does not include adequate provisions to make it easier for Native American women to obtain orders of protection from abusers. In addition, the House substitute drops the anti-discrimination provisions that would ensure access to services for LGBT survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. Finally, the House bill eliminates specific protections for victims of violence on college campuses, where we know high incidences of dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking occur.

The Leadership Conference believes that every battered person deserves protection, regardless of the victim's race, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Therefore, we urge you to vote against the House substitute for S.47 and to ask House leaders to bring the bipartisan Senate-passed VAWA Reauthorization to the floor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sakira Cook at 202-263-2894 or cook@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,


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