



# National Organization for Women

May 2, 2012

Dear NOW Leaders,

Congress is in recess, and we need to act NOW while they are home.

1. Publicly thank or chastise your state's senators for their VAWA votes.
2. Ask each representative in your state to sign on as a co-sponsor of the VAWA bill introduced by Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wis.), H.R. 4271.
3. Publicly oppose the House Republican version of VAWA (H.R. 4970) to your chapters and members and to every House Member in your state from either party.
4. Call representatives in your state who are on the House Judiciary Committee and ask that they oppose the Republican bill and support improving amendments offered by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) when the committee meets May 8.

## BACKGROUND

**Senate:** As you know, VAWA passed the Senate last week, 68-31. We hope that you are speaking out and writing public statements and letters to the editor, thanking the senators who voted YES on S. 1925 and chastising the senators who voted NO. If your senator voted NO, ask him (all no votes were men) to explain his vote to his constituents who are immigrant women, Native American women and LGBT victims -- underserved populations that the NO voters wanted VAWA to ignore. Are those survivors somehow not deserving of services?

**House:** Several things are going on at once in the House.

Republican legislators have introduced their own version of VAWA reauthorization (H.R. 4970), sponsored by Rep. Sandy Adams (R- Fla.). This version leaves out the important improvements and constituencies found in the Senate bill. At a press conference introducing this measure, conservative legislators underscored their disdain for immigrant, Native American and LGBT survivors of rape and intimate partner violence, insisting that VAWA's programs should only be for "true victims."

The House Judiciary Committee says it will mark up the Adams bill on Tuesday, May 8. If your representative is on the Judiciary Committee, contact her or him right away to lodge your opposition to H.R. 4970. Ask your representative to support amendments that would improve the bill, such as those to be offered by Rep. Conyers, ranking minority leader of the Judiciary Committee. Tell your representative at the very least to support amendments that would make the House bill consistent with the Senate bill, which had 15 Republicans voting YES.

[Moore VAWA bill, H.R. 4271](#) - Rep. Moore's VAWA reauthorization bill is even better than the Senate version, and we want as many co-sponsors on this bill as possible -- Democrats and Republicans. First, [check on the Thomas website](#), and type in H.R. 4271 to search for the bill and find out who are the cosponsors. If your representative is not on the list, call her or his D.C. office, ask to speak to the staffer handling the Violence Against Women Act, and urge them to get their boss on the list! If staff are interested, tell them to call Stephany Stern in Rep. Moore's office at 201-225-4572 or email her at [stephany.stern@mail.house.gov](mailto:stephany.stern@mail.house.gov).

Also, please get back to Pat Reuss at [patreuss@verizon.net](mailto:patreuss@verizon.net), and let her know what staffers are saying when you ask them to get their boss on the Moore VAWA bill. NOW and Moore's office are developing materials for you to use, so check your inbox frequently for more information.

Our goal is to get all 190 Democrats in the House and as many brave Republicans as we can (this may be doubtful, but we never give up) to be on the co-sponsor list -- ideally in time for the May 8 markup, but definitely before the bill goes to the House floor sometime later in May.

House activity on VAWA will receive massive media and political attention, especially if the bad version passes out of committee with NO Democratic votes and opposition from national and community groups that support VAWA.

Remember, members can't officially sign on until Congress is back in session on Monday, May 7, but Moore's office will be collecting names, and I'll be sending out updated lists of any new co-sponsors of her bill. If you have any questions or reports after you speak with congressional offices, please call Pat Reuss at 703-978-0968 or email her at [patreuss@verizon.net](mailto:patreuss@verizon.net).

Thanks for all you do!

*Terry O'Neill*