



WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
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February 1, 2013

Senator Patrick Leahy  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: NAACP STRONG SUPPORT FOR S. 47, TO REAUTHORIZE THE 1994 VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN ACT**

Dear Chairman Leahy:

On behalf of the NAACP, our nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, I would like to sincerely thank you for your leadership in introducing S. 47, legislation strengthening and reauthorizing the 1994 *Violence Against Women Act* (VAWA). As strong and consistent supporters of VAWA, the NAACP recognizes that this important legislation would improve criminal justice and community-based responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in the United States.

As you know, the NAACP supported the passage of VAWA in 1994, and its reauthorization in 2000 and 2005. We have witnessed VAWA change the landscape for victims of violence in the United States who once suffered in silence. Victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking have now been able to access services, and a new generation of families and justice system professionals has come to understand that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking are crimes that our society will no longer tolerate. Your bill will not only continue proven effective programs, but that it will make key changes to streamline VAWA and make sure that even more people have access to safety, stability and justice.

Thank you again for your continued leadership in this endeavor. Your thoughtfulness and tenacity in this area over the years has improved the lives of millions of Americans. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office at (202) 463-2940.

Sincerely,

Hilary O. Shelton  
Director, NAACP Washington Bureau &  
Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy