



national **latin@** network

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
US House of Representatives
2426 Rayburn HOB 271 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Nadler, Jackson Lee and Fitzpatrick:

I am writing on behalf of Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities to convey our support of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 (VAWA Reauthorization, H.R. 1620). We greatly appreciate your leadership and effort to fulfill the promise of the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

Casa de Esperanza was founded in 1982 in Minnesota to provide emergency shelter and support services for women and children experiencing domestic violence. In 2009, Casa de Esperanza launched the National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, which is a national resource center that provides training & technical assistance, research, and policy advocacy on addressing and preventing gender-based violence in Latin@ communities. Through offering direct services in Minnesota and nationwide advocacy, we are very aware of the critical role that VAWA has played in enhancing access to services, safety, and justice for all survivors.

VAWA Reauthorization is a necessary part of our nation's commitment to ending gender-based violence. It includes narrowly focused, yet critical, enhancements to address gaps identified by survivors and direct service providers. Among many provisions, the measure maintains vital protections for all survivors, invests in prevention, improves access to safe housing and economic independence, and includes long overdue funding for culturally specific communities.

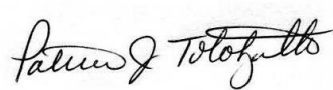
Since the enactment of VAWA in 1994 and during each subsequent reauthorization of VAWA in 2000, 2005, and 2013, Congress has continued to support and *improve* protections for survivors in a bipartisan manner. During this time in which we are experiencing the dual crises of the Coronavirus and gender-based violence, we are reminded of the fragility of life. It is not now or ever acceptable to merely maintain the status quo, let alone undermine current protections and reduce access to safety and justice for victims and survivors, particularly those from vulnerable

communities which also have been more deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to ensuring important pathways to safety, justice, and well-being for all survivors, H.R. 1620 includes important enhancements that improve access to intervention and prevention services. We are enthusiastic about the funding for legal and housing services that are life-saving resources for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We are also very encouraged by the funds provided for culturally specific programs in H.R. 1620.

We appreciate your commitment to moving this bill forward with bipartisan support and continue the longstanding commitment of Congress to support enhanced services and protections in each reauthorization of VAWA. Thank you for being a champion on behalf of all victims and survivors and for your commitment to improving the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

Sincerely,



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