



March 8, 2021

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
U.S House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
U.S House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Jackson Lee, Representative Fitzpatrick, and Chairman Nadler:

Jewish Women International (JWI), the leading Jewish organization working to end gender-based violence, applauds your steadfast dedication and leadership in introducing the bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 (H.R.1620).

As a Steering Committee member of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, convener of the Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and Clergy Task Force to End Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community, and co-chair of Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, JWI supports this bill that builds on VAWA's previous successes and adds key enhancements to ensure the safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is our nation's single most effective tool in responding to the devastating crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking – providing lifesaving programs and services. Since its initial passage, VAWA has dramatically enhanced and improved our nation's response to violence against women. VAWA is essential in the funding of programs and services that survivors rely on every day. This commonsense legislation protects victims and survivors, helps save lives, and makes our communities safer places to worship, heal, and thrive.

Even with all of the advancements in the last twenty-seven years, there is still a tremendous amount of work that remains. One third of all women (nearly 52 million women) in the United States have been victims of physical violence by an intimate partner. In 2016 alone, there were 1.1 million domestic violence victimizations, 54% of which involved domestic partners. The Department of Justice's Criminal Victimization 2016 Bulletin found that more than 10% of all violent crime is due to intimate partner violence.

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 responds to the urgent issues survivors face every day by supporting programming to prevent gender-based violence, closing Tribal and firearms loopholes to protect all survivors, strengthening public housing protections for survivors, expanding the ability of providers to respond to sexual harassment, and prioritizing support for Communities of Color.

JWI and our 75,000 members and supporters greatly appreciate your dedication and leadership in advancing the critical mission of passing a targeted bill that will have a broad impact on all survivors. Congress now has an opportunity to come together and pass meaningful legislation to help save the lives of victims of gender-based violence – we are grateful that you are spearheading this effort.

Thank you again for being tireless champions of survivors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meredith Jacobs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meredith Jacobs
JWI CEO