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purposes of identification only.*

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Jackson Lee and Representative Fitzpatrick,

Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund commends you for introducing the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021. Legal Momentum is the nation's first and longest-serving advocacy organization dedicated to advancing gender equality. We make these advancements through targeted litigation, innovative public policy, and education. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence is a core pillar of Legal Momentum's work, in recognition of the fact that freedom from violence is central to achieving true equality.

Legal Momentum is proud to have been closely involved in developing the landmark bipartisan legislation that became the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994. Our organization played a critical role in drafting and advocating for VAWA's passage, beginning this effort with then-Senator Joe Biden in 1990. We have since worked in coalition with the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence to see enhanced services and protections included in each reauthorization of VAWA, each of which had bipartisan support. Legal Momentum is grateful to you for your dedication to reauthorizing VAWA in a way that responds to the needs of all those affected by gender-based violence.

The updates to the existing Violence Against Women Act that are included in your bill reflect the real needs of victims and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In particular, we are pleased that this reauthorization of VAWA meets the needs of communities of color. We applaud your commitment to pass a bipartisan reauthorization of this critical legislation. We support introducing the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 and hope that your colleagues across the political spectrum will recognize the importance of these enhancements and join in supporting it.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to protecting victims and survivors.

Sincerely,



Lynn Hecht Schafran, Esq., Senior Vice President
Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund

