

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
US House of Representatives
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
US House of Representatives
2132 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
US House of Representatives
271 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Lee, Nadler, and Fitzpatrick:

I am writing on behalf of the 180,000 National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) advocates across the United States in support of the bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 (VAWA Reauthorization). We are grateful for your leadership and effort to fulfill the promise of the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994, which NCJW helped to draft and pass along with its subsequent reauthorizations.

Intimate partner violence, sexual assault, harassment, and stalking affect millions of people. On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million individuals. The numbers can be even higher for members of transgender and gender-queer communities as well as for native women. Additionally, dating partners are without protections afforded to other current or former intimate partners. Although stalking is a crime according to the federal government, the classification varies state to state, leaving survivors vulnerable. Sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, continues to be a pervasive problem on college campuses, in the US military, and in the workplace.

VAWA Reauthorization is a step in the right direction to address many of these issues. 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.

For 127 years, NCJW advocates have been committed to ensuring everyone lives free from coercion, violence, and exploitation. We are pleased to work with you to end the scourge of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking through passage of VAWA Reauthorization. Survivors deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,



Jody Rabhan
Chief Policy Officer
National Council of Jewish Women