



# Public Policy Office Legislative Update

October  
2004

## Congress Wanes on Passing Budget for 2005

As the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress nears the end of the second session, Federal legislators have been unsuccessful in passing most of the appropriation bills for fiscal year 2005. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, the House of Representatives passed HR 4754 which includes funding for Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary. This bill contains funding for a range of Violence Against Women Act programs. Last week the House passed the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill (HR 5006) which appropriates funds to the Family Violence Prevention and Service Act (FVPSA) programs as well as the National Domestic Violence Hotline and several Center for Disease Control programs.

The House bills provide funding slightly below fiscal year 2004 funding levels. HR 4754 provides \$383.7 million for VAWA programs compared to 2004's \$387.7 million in funding. Decreases oc-

curred most notably in the Grants to Combat Violence Against Women which will receive a cut of \$8.5 million. HR 5006 cuts the Labor, HHS and Education funding for FVPSA by \$800,000. The bill also cuts the Rape Prevention and Education programs by \$600,000. However, the National Hotline will continue to receive funding at 2004 levels at \$3 million.

The equivalent Senate bills passed on September 15, 2004 provide for slight increases in these programs from 2004 budget figures. VAWA programs received a \$22.2 million increase in funding in Senate bill S 2809. The largest increase in funding provides \$30 million, an increase of \$20 million, for administration and management costs for the Department of Justice. The Grants to Combat Violence Against Women programs will also receive an increase in \$7.4 million from 2004 funding of \$168.3 million to \$175.7 million.

The only cuts in funding in the Senate bill for VAWA programs decreases the transitional housing grants from \$15 million in FY 2004 to \$10 million for 2005.

Senate bill S 2810 provides funding for the Family Violence Prevention and Service Act (FVPSA) programs, the National Domestic Violence Hotline and CDC programs increased funding from \$129.4 million in FY 2004 to \$131.5 million for FY 2005. This bill would increase FVPSA funding by \$1.6 million. Other increases include an additional \$500,000 for the National Hotline and a \$1.4 million augment to the Rape Prevention and Education program.

In the President's budget request for 2004, Bush requested a \$50 million increase in Federal funding for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). VOCA was reduced by 8% in 2003 but raised to \$625 million in 2004 appropriations.

Although the Senate bill requests current funding levels for VOCA, the House is asking for an increase to \$650 million. VOCA serves nearly 3 million victims a year and is a key funding source for services that help victims deal with the aftermath of crime.

For a detailed chart on these bills, previous years' funding levels and the President's budget requests for these programs, please visit NCADV's website pages on Public Policy at <http://www.ncadv.org/publicpolicy/policyhome.htm>. You may also access the House Appropriations website at: <http://appropriations.house.gov/> and the Senate Appropriations please visit: <http://appropriations.senate.gov/>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email the NCADV Public Policy Office at [publicpolicy@ncadv.org](mailto:publicpolicy@ncadv.org) or call us at 202-745-1211.

## Violence Against Women Act Celebrates 10 Years

On the tenth anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act, NCADV and Stop Family Violence celebrate this landmark legislation that has improved domestic violence laws and authorized nearly \$5 billion in federal spending for domestic violence programs; legal assistance; rape prevention and education programs; training for law enforcement, judges and medical personnel; services for the disabled and the elderly; increased protections for battered immigrant women and brought national attention to these issues.

Please join NCADV and Stop Family Violence in thanking Congress for providing these lifesaving programs. Visit <http://www.stopfamilyviolence.org/sfv/vawa.html> to leave a personal statement telling how violence against women and children has affected you and your community and how VAWA programs have

made a difference.

NCADV and Stop Family Violence would like advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, clergy and others to visit the website and tell a compelling story of a victim that you have helped or how you were unable to assist someone because of the lack of resources. We ask anyone posting information on the site to respect the confidentiality and safety of their clients and therefore not provide any identifying information. Survivors of violence are encouraged to add comments to the site as well.

Here's what one survivor wrote: "After 7 years of [this] torture, abuse, verbal put downs I went to a shelter on the west

coast. I received counseling at the women's center there for almost a year. I learned that the abuse wasn't my fault, If it wasn't for these people I believe in my heart, me and my children would be dead!!! PLEASE KEEP FUNDING THESE PROGRAMS WE NEED THEM FOR OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN, OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE WE NEED TO PROTECT THEM!!!!"

This year also marks the beginning of a year-long campaign to help ensure the reauthorization of VAWA before it expires next year in September 2005. NCADV and Stop Family Violence will produce a booklet of these comments to distribute to Members of Congress. Providing Members of Congress personal stories about the effectiveness of VAWA will reinforce the urgency to reauthorize the act. These stories will help legislators understand how their



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constituents have overcome abuse and how VAWA programs have assisted in making the lives of victims and their children safer.

For more information on the VAWA Reauthorization in 2005, please contact NCADV's Public Policy Office at 202-745-1211 or email Jill Morris, NCADV's Public Policy Director at [jmorris@ncadv.org](mailto:jmorris@ncadv.org).

# NCADV & NNEDV Partner for Lobby & Legislative Days

In June 2004 the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) and the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) joined forces in an effort to influence Members of Congress. This year's annual Legislative and Lobby Days were focused on lobbying for the increased Federal funding for violence against women programs and the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA).

Over 200 participants, representing state domestic violence coalitions and local programs from all over the country, attended the events held in Washington, DC. Participants attended events over 3 days to learn more information regarding the current state of Federal domestic violence legislation and to network with other participants.

The Legislative and Lobby Day events were kicked off with a luncheon on Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Hotel near Capitol Hill. Special guest speakers included domestic violence survivor Sheryl Dillard and NNEDV spokesperson, actor Victor Rivers. After the luncheon, NCADV Public Policy Director Jill Morris moderated a panel of representatives from the National Task Force to End Sexual and

Domestic Violence Against Women who presented information on the current draft of the next Violence Against Women Act. The panelists elaborated on several proposed sections of the bill including programs for prevention, healthcare professionals, children and youth services, housing, and amendments to the existing Grants to Combat Violence Against Women grants. Panelists also mentioned the inclusion bill

domestic violence issues and his involvement in championing the Family Violence postage stamp. Congresswoman Julia Carson (D-7<sup>th</sup> IN) joined the reception and told a touching story about her own experience with family violence and encouraged the group to keep up their good work.

On June 9<sup>th</sup> participants began a busy day at a breakfast that was held at the Dirksen

adamantly for reauthorization of VAWA at their lobbying appointments.

At the end of a long day of lobbying, participants were invited to a Reception with Members of the House of Representatives in the Rayburn House Office Building. Lynn Rosenthal thanked the participants for their involvement in the days events and introduced Members of the House as they arrive. Those speaking at the event included Representative Melissa Hart (R-4<sup>th</sup> PA), Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-2<sup>nd</sup> WI), Representative Sue Kelly (R-19<sup>th</sup> NY), Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-10<sup>th</sup> TX), and Representative Julia Carson (D-7<sup>th</sup> IN). The Representatives spoke about their commitment to ending violence against women and gave anecdotes about how programs in their districts are helping battered women and children escape violence.

NCADV is in the planning stages for lobby day events for 2005. For more information about participating in future NCADV Lobby Day events please send your contact information to NCADV's Public Policy office at [publicpolicy@ncadv.org](mailto:publicpolicy@ncadv.org) or call 202-745-1211.



provisions that would expand services for Native American women.

Tuesday evening participants enjoyed a reception sponsored by NCADV at the Reserve Officers Association. Rita Smith, NCADV Executive Director, introduced Tammy Kerr of The Body Shop who spoke about the company's campaign to collect cell phones to benefit NCADV and battered women. Vivian Otteman from Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell's office spoke about the Senator's commitment to

Senate Office Building before setting off to attend lobbying appointments with their Members of Congress. Lynn Rosenthal, Executive Director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, introduced the guest speakers that included: Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), and Senator Joseph Biden, Jr. (D-DE). The Senators praised the work of domestic violence activists and encouraged participants to advocate

## NCADV to Publish New "How to Lobby Manual"

### COMING SOON!!

The NCADV Public Policy Office is in the process of updating and revising its How To Lobby Manual. This legislative action booklet contains vital information for domestic violence advocates, and is designed to assist activists in becoming involved in the democratic process.

The manual addresses information related to the legislative process and community organizing. Topics include how a bill becomes a law, visiting with legislators, and tips for community organizing. The manual includes sample letters to assist activists when writing letters to legislators, as well as contact information for several key Federal and state government agencies.

This resource tool and action kit will

also contain information about motivating and organizing voting campaigns. NCADV will also provide the most current versions of our Domestic Violence Fact Sheets which may be duplicated and shared as an additional organizing resource.

NCADV's Public Policy Office encourages advocates not only to follow domestic violence legislation, but to also **take action** politically by utilizing the many tactics outlined in the manual. By expressing your views and contacting your legislators regarding your concerns, you will become part of the social change devoted to ensuring passage of legislation which will better protect domestic violence victims and their families.

The How to Lobby Manual will be available later this fall in hard copy as well as a downloadable PDF document on NCADV's

website. Participants in NCADV's Lobby Day events will receive a copy of the manual and have an opportunity to attend How to Lobby Workshops.

For more information, email NCADV's Public Policy office at [publicpolicy@ncadv.org](mailto:publicpolicy@ncadv.org).



## HUD Releases HMIS Standards that Demand Identifying Information

On July 30, 2004, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released Final standards for the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).

The final standards remove the previously granted exemption for victims of domestic violence, therefore raising concerns for local shelter programs about the safety of their clients. In 2003, HUD had released standards that recognized this risk to domestic victims and provided an exemption for domestic violence shelters by allowing any service provider an exemption from entering victim-identifying data for individual victims.

However, the new standards state that "domestic violence programs that receive HUD McKinney-Vento funds to participate in local HMIS. HUD expects domestic violence programs that receive HUD McKinney-Vento funds to implement the universal and, where applicable, program-specific data elements described in this final Notice." (Pg 45902).

In addition, the final standards require organizations to "apply these additional protections to protect client information as they

deem appropriate. They must also comply with federal, state and local laws that require additional confidentiality protections" (Pg 45928). Therefore, some domestic violence programs may not be required to submit any victim-identifying data if doing so would violate these laws.



The HUD Final standards do permit "the entry of domestic violence programs last, including after the October 2004 goal for HMIS implementation. The later staging of entry into the HMIS by domestic violence programs will be taken into account in HUD's assessment of Continuum of Care (COC) progress in HMIS implementation in the national Continuum of Care competitive ranking process" (Pg 45903). Therefore, some domestic violence programs

are permitted late-stage entry into HMIS systems until after the October 2004 deadline, and with no stated deadline. This later phasing in of domestic violence programs will not hurt communities in the scoring of HUD grant applications. Therefore, local domestic violence programs are not yet required to provide client-identifying data to HUD at this time.

NCADV has been working closely with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDDV) to educate local programs on these new data-reporting requirements. NRCDDV sponsored a series of conference calls with NCADV and Cindy Southworth of the NNEDV Technology Safety Project, to explain to local advocates the particulars of the standards and how they may impact local programs.

NCADV has also been working with NNEDV to appeal to HUD to reinstate the domestic violence exemption. Both organizations have sent letters to HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson and President Bush explaining how the new HMIS standards would jeopardize the safety of domestic violence victims.

NCADV is encouraging programs to send a letter to Secretary Jackson explaining how the new standards will impact the safety of their clients.

To download a sample letter for local programs to send to Secretary Jackson and to view NCADV's letter to Secretary Jackson and President Bush, please visit NCADV's website at: <http://www.ncadv.org/publicpolicy/policyhome.htm>.

For a copy of NNEDV's official appeal petition on rulemaking for HUD's HMIS standards, please see NNEDV's website at: <http://www.nnedv.org/default.asp?Page=58>.

For additional information or to be on the mailing list for HMIS updates, please contact NCADV's Public Policy office at 202-745-1211.

To contact NNEDV's Technology Safety Project, please call 202-543-5566 or visit their website at [www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org).

## Congress Passes Extension for TANF Until September

On June 22, 2004 Congress agreed by unanimous consent to pass HR 4589, introduced by Rep. Wally Herger (R-CA), which would reauthorize the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant program through September 30, 2004. TANF funding, originally set to expire in September of 2002, has continually been reauthorized through a series of six previous short-term extensions. These extensions will allow states to continue receiving grants for mandatory child care, abstinence education, and transitional medical assistance for the next month.

During the two years since TANF's original expiration date, both the House and the Senate have individually proposed and passed comprehensive welfare reauthorization bills, but were

unable to resolve their differences on issues such as increased mandatory work requirements and immigrant eligibility. Among these unresolved issues, and of particular concern to advocates against domestic violence, are federally funded marriage promotion programs.

The original welfare reform legislation enacted in 1996 set forth clear goals to decrease the number of out-of-wedlock child-births and increase the number of two-parent families. Most states, however, have chosen to direct the bulk of their block grants exclusively to economic supports (TANF funds of over \$100 billion have been disbursed in the last seven years but only about \$20 million have been spent on promoting marriage). Attempts to enforce government marriage pro-

motion programs have come in the forms of President Bush's Healthy Marriage Initiative and the House bill H.R. 4, both of which allocate a specific amount of funds (\$1.5 billion and an annual \$300 million, respectively) to achieving certain marriage promotion objectives.

NCADV, along with other organizations such as the CATO Institute, Legal Momentum, the Family Violence Prevention Fund, the Institute for Women's Policy Research, and the National Network to End Domestic Violence, is strongly opposed to any legislation that includes a proposal to fund government marriage promotion programs.

Not only will such programs divert already limited funds from basic economic supports such as child care funding and job training, but they may also influence private,

familial decisions and place domestic violence victims at risk.

NCADV asks advocates to contact your Members of Congress and let them know that you would like TANF to receive a multi-year extension without policy changes or funding for marriage promotion programs. Marriage promotion as a solution to poverty is unproven and undermines the economic self-sufficiency of women.

For more information on the status of future TANF legislation, please contact NCADV's Public Policy Office at 202-745-1211 or send an email to [publicpolicy@ncadv.org](mailto:publicpolicy@ncadv.org).

## House Defeats Undocumented Alien Emergency Medical Assistance Amendment

H.R. 3722, the Undocumented Alien Emergency Medical Assistance Amendment, was solidly defeated in the House of Representatives on May 18, 2004 by a vote of 88-331.

The bill, sponsored by Representative **Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA)**, would amend section 1011 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 to impose conditions on Federal reimbursement of emergency health services given to undocumented aliens.

Currently, the Medicare Act allocates \$1 billion in federal funds to hospitals and other medical service providers for uncompensated emergency treatment of

immigrants who are undocumented, with state allotments based on a ratio of undocumented to documented immigrants, with additional amounts for the six states with the highest number of undocumented aliens.

The Rohrabacher bill amended the act to prohibit compensation for providers who do not determine the citizenship, immigration, financial and employment status and address of patients. Medical Providers would also be responsible for obtaining a digital electronic identifier (fingerprint or other biometric identifier) from the immigrant. Additionally, H.R. 3722 requires that employers of undocumented, uninsured workers reimburse the federal government for any payments

made to hospitals for emergency services.

Opponents of H.R. 3722 claim that the act would turn emergency room workers into "border patrol officers" and jeopardize their ability to provide quality medical care, in addition to burdening already overloaded administrative departments. Immigrants may also be deterred from seeking medical treatment for fear of deportation, which places other citizens at risk for viruses and other communicable diseases.

Other co-sponsors of the bill included: Rep. Doug Bereuter (NE-1), Rep Scott Garrett (NJ-5), Rep Walter B Jones, Jr. (NC-3) and Rep Thomas G. Tancredo, (CO-6).

### Public Policy INTERNS Wanted!

Do you know someone who:

- **Has a commitment to ending domestic violence?**
- **Has an interest in learning about the national public-policy making process?**
- **Has an understanding of and commitment to diversity issues?**
- **Has excellent written and oral skills?**
- **Has the ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment, under deadlines?**
- **Has a good sense of humor?**

If so, that individual should apply to be an intern with the Public Policy Office of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. To do so please contact Kelly Williams at (202) 745-1211 or email at [kwilliams@ncadv.org](mailto:kwilliams@ncadv.org).

## NCADV Public Policy Office Welcomes New Staff

NCADV is happy to welcome two new staff members to the Public Policy Office in Washington, DC.

Jill Morris joined NCADV as the new Public Policy Director in April of this year. She joins NCADV from California where she served as the Safe Network Coordinator for the California Coalition for Battered Women. Jill is originally from Commerce, GA

and received her BA in Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland in College Park.

Kelly K. Williams joined the Public Policy Office as the new Public Policy Associate in June after serving as the Webmaster for The General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) of The United Methodist Church and Program Assistant for the Louise and Hugh Moore Population Project which

is funded through GBCS. Kelly spent a substantial amount of time working on Capitol Hill for Congressman Sonny Callahan and Senator Jeff Sessions, both of Alabama. Kelly is originally from Mobile, AL and received her BA in Political Science from Auburn University.

NCADV would also like to thank this summer's interns for all their hard work. Many thanks to

Annie Park from the University of Southern California, Amy Woo from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles and Jen Winkelman from American University, Washington College of Law.

Anyone interested in internships or volunteer work with NCADV's DC office should call Kelly Williams at 202-745-1211 or email her at [kwiliams@ncadv.org](mailto:kwiliams@ncadv.org).

### Register to Vote

on NCADV's Website at [www.NCADV.org](http://www.NCADV.org)!



## 11th National NCADV Conference Held in Colorado

NCADV's 11<sup>th</sup> National Domestic Violence Conference, "Radical Organizing for Change" (July 11 - 14, 2004 in Denver, Colorado) was a huge success with over 1,000 participants, presenters and vendors from 48 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Canada, Pakistan, and the Virgin Islands.



After the opening plenary session, the conference officially kicked off with a welcoming reception graciously hosted by the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

The conference featured nearly 100 workshops that grappled topics such as: A Critical Retrospective of the Battered Women's Movement; Respectful Yet Ferocious Advocacy; Voices of Men; Supervised Visitation Centers; Teen Dating Violence; Why Battered Women are Arrested; Domestic Violence as Human Rights Issue and many, many more.

All of the plenary session speakers impressed the audience with compelling topics such as: Restorative Justice; Human Trafficking; War & Rape Culture; the Prison Industrial Complex and Women of Color in the Global

Economy.

Susan Schechter and Sandra Comancho, two long-time advocates in the domestic violence movement who passed away recently, were remembered in a commemorative ceremony that didn't leave a dry eye in the house. NCADV also paid tribute to women in Colorado who were killed in 2004 due to domestic violence.

The next Annual Conference will be held in 2006. For more information on future NCADV conferences and events please contact our Denver office at 303-839-1852, via email at [conference@ncadv.org](mailto:conference@ncadv.org) or visit our website at [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org).

## NNEDV VotePower Program Encourages DV Shelter Residents to Vote

Each year, more than half a million women seek emergency shelter services for herself and her children, and hundreds of thousands more women seek nonresidential services in an attempt to escape the violence in their homes. As more and more women seek these life-saving programs, funding continues to decline. Unfortunately, many victims of domestic violence are not registered to vote and therefore are unable to hold elected officials accountable for the decisions they make affecting these programs.

Since stalking is common in domestic violence situations, victims often have extraordinary needs for safety and confidentiality. Victims of domestic violence often hesitate to register to vote because voter registration is public record. Victims also relocate frequently to escape their abusers, and may live for years traveling from place to place without a permanent address to register to vote.

Due to their unique circumstances, battered women are a marginalized, disenfranchised and often invisible population unlikely

to be reached by traditional voter mobilization campaigns.

This fall, the National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund (NNEDV Fund) introduced the VotePower project, the first national effort to overcome the obstacles preventing battered women from exercising their right to vote. VotePower has partnered with state domestic violence coalitions and other organizations in Arizona, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin to employ intensive voter registration campaigns to increase battered women's civic participation in 2004 and beyond.

Through a partnership with Lifetime Television for Women, VotePower will provide voter education materials to domestic violence shelters and programs in these states. In addition, VotePower will provide assistance for getting battered women safely to the polls on Election Day.

Local programs in New Jersey, Montana, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa also will be conducting voter engagement activities leading up to the election.

For more information about VotePower and registration activities in your state, please visit [www.nnedvfund.org](http://www.nnedvfund.org) or contact Cheryl L. O'Donnell at [votepower@nnedv.org](mailto:votepower@nnedv.org) or 202-543-5566 ext. 23.



### WE'VE MOVED

Please update our new address

**NCADV Public Policy Office  
1633 Q Street, NW Suite 210  
Washington, DC 20009**



# National & Global Domestic Violence Policy News

## Alaska

Attorney General Gregg Renkes addressed the Violence Against Women Summit on June 30th this year to discuss Alaska's new domestic violence laws and procedures. The new laws included: protective orders increased from 6 months to 1 year if issues after notice and a hearing; laws on consecutive sentencing were changed to give courts more direction on forcing offenders to serve jail time for each offense; investigating officers and prosecuting attorneys must notify victims of information about the Office of Victims Rights; and created the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team which requires municipalities to review cases where death or serious physical injury results from domestic violence.

## Arizona

Effective Aug. 18, an ordinance passed by the Chandler City, AZ City Council makes it a crime to prevent or interfere with the use of a telephone in an emergency. The new law will allow a police officer in such incidents to charge the offender with a misdemeanor punishable up to a \$2,500 fine and six months in jail.

Next week Arizona will extend its bar hours from 1 AM to 2 AM. Police officers and hospital workers fear an increase in the number of drunken drivers, bar fights and domestic violence. Local police departments are planning added hours and officers for the new hours once the law goes into effect.

## California

The California Department of Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Branch reorganized its 2005 funding structure to provide increased prevention funding to future Battered Women Shelter Project grantees. Although this program increased prevention funding for 2005 BWSP grants, it eliminated all DHS prevention funding for non shelter-based programs. Only organizations that are considered "shelter" programs are now eligible to apply for the funding. Programs that stand to lose their funding in 2005 include the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center's Stop Partner

Abuse/Domestic Violence program, the California Hospital Medical Center, the City and County of San Francisco and the City of Berkeley, Family Health Centers of San Diego, Family Violence Law Center, Inc., Family Violence Prevention Fund, Humboldt County Public Health Department, Fresno County Human Services Agency, and the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department.

## Maine

The Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men, an organization that started a hot line for battered men, has filed a discrimination lawsuit in Penobscot County Superior Court against the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence. A person identified as John Doe filed the suit earlier this month after the organization received a "right to sue" letter from the Maine Human Rights Commission. "It appears on its face that the coalition is drawing a distinction and stating that women and children deserve more protection than men", said attorney Ferdinand "Andy" Slater of Ellsworth, who is representing the men's hot line.

## Maryland

The Governor signed a bill that creates the penalty of a misdemeanor subject to a fine, imprisonment, or both, for respondents subject to final protective orders who fail to surrender firearms. Other legislation enacted by the Governor included the establishment of a Task Force to study how the state can utilize GPS technology to monitor certain individuals who have committed criminal offenses and how law enforcement can use it to solve crimes and streamline workload. Use in domestic violence cases will be considered.

## New York

The Rochester/Monroe County Domestic Violence Consortium is updating its domestic violence resource book. Officials want to make sure victims of domestic violence know that there are resources out there to help them. In October the county will hold a conference for law enforcement officers, court personnel, and the district attorney's office and

other social service agencies. At this conference, the group will come up with protocols and will share the information with the community at another conference in April 2005.

## North Carolina

In response to the increased number of murders related to domestic violence in North Carolina, legislators recently approved domestic violence legislation that increases punishments for batterers, creates a new criminal count for strangulation victims, and gives victims of sexual assault and stalking the ability to obtain a civil protective order against offenders to which they have no prior relationship. In addition, the bill creates a new fund to help provide legal services for victims of domestic violence. The fund has an estimated annual budget of one million dollars generated by a new \$100 fee paid by out-of-state attorneys that want to appear in a case in a North Carolina Court. Currently the bill is waiting signing by Governor Mike Easley and will take effect December 1, 2004.

## South Carolina

Democratic Senator Fritz Hollings, included \$148,000 for general operations in congressionally mandated grant money in the 2004 Omnibus Appropriations bill for Safe Harbor, which runs shelters in Greenville and Anderson counties. The Cumbee Center serving Aiken and surrounding counties received the other \$218,000.

## Vermont

Health care providers and domestic violence groups are working on a state-wide plan to improve services to domestic violence victims seeking medical treatments. The plan is aimed at making sure doctors, nurses, and other professionals know what questions to ask - and how to ask them - to ensure patients who need domestic violence counseling can receive it. The Vermont Medical Society, UVM, the Vermont Network Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the state Health Department, Central Vermont Hospital are encouraging health care pro-

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viders to adopt protocols for screening and intervening in cases of domestic violence. They are also reviewing Vermont state laws regarding domestic violence to see if they should be changed.

## Washington

After a 10-year legal battle, Laura Luis Hernandez, a victim of domestic violence, won her right to live in the United States. Hernandez took her case to an immigration judge, then an appeals board until finally a federal appeals court temporarily halted her deportation. Seattle immigration Judge Edward Kandler granted her legal permanent residency, congratulating Luis Hernandez and giving her his blessing. Luis Hernandez, 45, who has two jobs working for groups serving the homeless, will be able to visit her two children in Mexico once she gets her green card in a few months.

The Eastside Domestic Violence Program closed its shelter and are offering women who want to leave abusive relationships choices about where to go. Women with large families, language barriers, or from cultures that do not support seeking help from outside the family have discovered that traditional shelters do not fully meet their needs. The program leased 12 apartments where women and children can live for up to three months. Participants in the private-living programs say that the benefits of the new program provide more privacy and freedom.

## Wisconsin

Wisconsin Act 130 went into effect on March 13, 2004, thereby creating a presumption against awarding joint or sole custody to a domestic violence perpetrator in a family law proceeding. In order for this presumption to apply, the court must make a finding of either a pattern or serious incident of inter-spousal battery or conduct. If the presumption is found to apply, it may be rebutted by the abusing party only if that person offers evidence of completion of a certified batterers treatment program, can show that he/she is not currently abusing alcohol or drugs, and if the court finds that it is in the best interest of the child for the abus-

ing parent to be awarded joint or sole custody. The Act also allows the court to impose conditions such as: requiring third party exchange of the children; requiring supervised physical placement; requiring that the abusing party complete a certified batterers treatment program; and requiring the party to abstain from possessing or consuming alcohol or drugs.

## National

In July 2004, Lifetime Television and Rock the Vote conducted a poll that found that 94 % of women between the ages 18 to 24 say that a candidate's position on preventing violence against women will greatly or somewhat influence their vote. However, less than one in ten young women report that they have heard the candidates address these issues directly.

The State Department's Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons recently reported that 800,000 to 900,000 women and children are trafficked each year around the world. They are kidnapped, sold by desperate family members, lured by deceptive offers of jobs, and sometimes recruited online. It is estimated that as many as 18,000 to 20,000 victims of trafficking may be in the United States.

Most trafficking victims that are rescued in the United States are helped by someone who notices something out of the ordinary, such as a woman who wears the same clothing all the time or fears strangers. The U.S. Department of Justice and Labor have set up a hotline to report trafficking and worker exploitation: 1-888-428-7581. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services now has the power to certify people as victims of trafficking, which allows them to access food stamps and other services.

## Global Laws

The Harvard Law website hosts a link to domestic violence laws in many countries: <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/population/domesticviolence/domesticviolence.htm>.

## China

Domestic violence in China is up 50 percent from four years ago leaving 263 women dead last year. Despite these statistics, women's seeking help are consistently ignored by law enforcement agencies who consider it a family issue. Wang Fengxian, an assistant research scientist from the Sociology Center of Beijing So-

cial Science Institute said, "After women are physically assaulted many of them try to seek help from their relatives or law-enforcement agencies but they rarely get any support because society thinks it is a family issue, not a matter for the courts."

## Jakarta

The government submitted on Tuesday a bill on the protection of victims of domestic violence, which aims to provide greater protection for women, amid increasing cases of abuse. Under the bill, a person who is found guilty of sexual abuse that results in a physical injury may be sentenced to a prison term of between five years and 20 years, or a fine of between Rp 25 million (US\$2,700) and Rp 500 million. State Minister for Women's Empowerment Sri Redjeki Soemaryoto said the new bill replaced the bill on domestic violence, which had been submitted to lawmakers last year.

## Malaysia

Efforts to make marital rape a statutory offence in Malaysia is facing opposition. The mufti of Perak state, Harussani Zakaria, has declared that such a move is against Islam. He believes that "intimacy" in marriage is a husband's right. Women's groups in the country have been angered by this, and have given their support to the government's human rights commission's efforts to legally protect women from marital rape. As it is now, marital rape is not recognized in Malaysian laws. One of the concerns being raised is that marital rape is a Western concept. However advocates in local women's programs report that many of their clients admit to being raped by their husbands and state that the current law doesn't reflect the state of violence in their country.

## New Zealand

New Zealand First is calling for a review of the nation's *Domestic Violence Act*, claiming that many of the nation's women have lost faith in its ability to offer them protection. Arguments to review the bill say that the legislation is doing little to crack down on domestic violence. Women are being discouraged by court delays and the failures of authorities, and are turning to informal arrangements the police cannot enforce. Domestic violence claims 27 deaths each year. Advocates want the bill amended to include automatic arrest for anyone who breaches a protection order.



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The Public Policy Office of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is a national leader in the effort to create and influence federal legislation that positively effects the lives of battered women and children. We work closely with women's advocates at the local, state and national level to identify the issues facing battered women, their children and the people who serve them and to develop a legislative agenda to address these issues. Located in Washington, D.C., the Public Policy Office represents the needs of its over 2,000 members and coalition partners to elected officials in Congress.

The Public Policy Office lobbies Congress, monitors state and federal legislative developments, and provides information to shelters, state coalitions and other grassroots advocates on pending federal policy initiatives. We provide information and technical assistance to Congressional offices and works to educate the public on the impact of legislative efforts on domestic violence in the field. The Public Policy Office works in coalition with other organizations fighting to end oppression in the lives of women and all human beings here in the United States and abroad.

## Join NCADV's Mailing List

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