

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

February 21, 2017

President Trump,

We write this letter to express our deep concern about reports which indicate that your administration may be preparing to eliminate Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grants at the Department of Justice. This essential program was created after decades of growing unease over the rising violent crime rate against women and has served to protect some of the most vulnerable women and families in our country. Unfortunately, domestic and sexual violence continues to occur at an alarming rate and we feel strongly that Congress must protect the policies and procedures we have put in place at the federal level to respond to the needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking and sex trafficking.

As you know, VAWA was last authorized during the 113th Congress in a convincingly bipartisan manner. Countless lives have been saved by this law which was first authorized in 1994 and improved in the years since. Present day programs defend victims of human trafficking and domestic violence who may not have any other alternative resources. In addition, Congress imposed new accountability provisions including audit requirements on all grantees and comprehensive reporting requirements to ensure we are focusing on areas of greatest need.

According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence's most recent national census, on a single average day as many as 71,828 victims are served with 40,302 finding refuge in our nation's domestic refuge shelters. Further, thousands of requests for service are unfulfilled each day as a result of lack of government funding and staffing reductions.

We look forward to your FY 2018 budget request and stand ready to assist your administration in prioritizing federal spending decisions that impact investments in communities across the nation. As the budget process continues, we intend to support essential programs that are working to change public attitudes about domestic violence and make a difference in the lives of women, children and families in every state. Thank you for your attention.

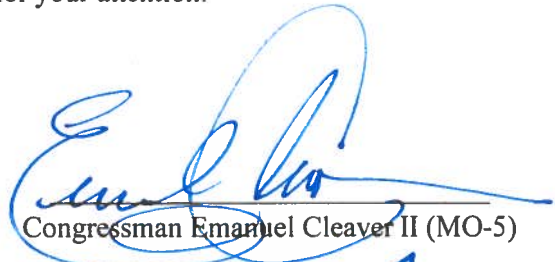
Sincerely,



Congressman Kevin Yoder (KS-03)



Congresswoman Jackie Walorski (IN-2)



Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II (MO-5)



Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster (NH-2)

cc: Mick Mulvaney
Director Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
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