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## **National Experts and Leading Advocates Celebrate Bi-Partisan Senate Passage of Strong and Inclusive VAWA Reauthorization Bill**

### ***Applaud Growing Bi-Partisan Momentum in the House to Pass Similar Legislation***

(Washington, DC) – Today, the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women (National Task Force) celebrates and commends the United States Senate for its passage of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (S. 47). This strong and inclusive legislation was championed by lead co-sponsors Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Michael Crapo (R-ID) to a 78-22 bi-partisan victory.

Since its original passage in 1994, VAWA has dramatically enhanced our nation's response to violence against girls and women, boys and men. More victims report domestic violence to the police and the rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 64%.

“The sexual assault services program in VAWA helps rape crisis centers keep their doors open to provide the frontline response to victims of rape,” declared Monika Johnson Hostler, President, the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV).

VAWA provides for a coordinated community approach, improving collaboration between law enforcement and victim services providers to better meet the needs of victims. These comprehensive and cost-effective programs not only save lives, they also save money. In fact, VAWA saved nearly \$12.6 billion in net averted social costs in just its first six years.

“Today's Senate vote is a resounding reminder that fighting violence in our homes and communities should be everyone's priority, and that agreement on this shared goal is not only possible across the aisles, but imperative,” stated Kim Gandy, President and CEO for the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Bipartisan momentum is also growing in the House of Representatives to swiftly pass a strong VAWA reauthorization bill that will protect all victims.

The National Task Force applauds Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI), herself a courageous survivor of domestic violence and sexual assault, for introducing a VAWA reauthorization bill (HR 11; similar to S.47) on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, and thanks the nearly 200 co-sponsors that have joined her in just the last few weeks.

We know that Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) are attempting to find common ground (click [here](#) for more), pledging to make VAWA's reauthorization an early House priority. We hope that they will continue to work together to reach agreement on a bill that includes all victims. The National Task Force also thanks the group of 17 Republican House Members who on February 11<sup>th</sup> wrote to Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor to urge them to immediately move to reauthorize VAWA; lamenting that reauthorization is "long overdue"; attesting that VAWA programs "save lives" and "have been a success in curbing domestic violence and supporting victims"; and appealing for their swift action to reach "bipartisan compromise" and to find a "bipartisan plan... that reaches all victims." [See letter and signatories here.](#)

The National Task Force welcomes these latest signs of bipartisan energy and commitment in the House of Representatives to VAWA's reauthorization and we know that the resounding Senate bipartisan vote will guide their efforts. We pledge to continue to build and support that momentum in the weeks ahead, and challenge the House to follow the Senate's lead and bring a strong, inclusive, bipartisan VAWA bill to the floor for a vote in the weeks ahead.

*The National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence represents thousands of national, tribal, state, territorial and local organizations, as well as survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.*

*We are committed to securing an end sexual assault and domestic violence against all people.*

*For more about the National Task Force's multi-year effort to ensure the reauthorization of a strong, bi-partisan VAWA that protects all victims, and for expert factsheets, sign-on letters, and other resources, visit [www.4VAWA.org](http://www.4VAWA.org).*

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For more information, fact sheets, press coverage, support letters and updates: [www.4vawa.org](http://www.4vawa.org).

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