



National Task Force
to End Sexual and
Domestic Violence Against Women

Ten things we would lose if Congress doesn't come up with a real VAWA...

(1) We would lose the provisions in S. 1925 that would protect Native women from repeat abuse. There is a gaping jurisdictional hole in Indian country that currently gives non-Indian perpetrators in Indian country a green light to commit domestic and dating violence. It is unacceptable if the final version of VAWA does not restore concurrent tribal criminal jurisdiction over all persons who commit crimes of dating violence, domestic violence, or violations of protection orders in Indian country.

(2) We would lose helpful expansions from both the Senate and the House bills that would provide crucial new protections for victims of sexual violence. We will lose major new provisions to improve the criminal justice response to sexual assault including support for specialized medical care and response teams. We will go back to having no protections for victims of sexual assault in public housing.

(3) We would lose the language from S. 1925 that explicitly authorizes States to protect LGBTQ victims by providing appropriate services. S.1925 explicitly protects victims from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or sexual identity—and it explicitly authorizes the states to provide appropriate services to LGBTQ victims. H.R.4970, and its manager's amendment, excludes LGBTQ survivors entirely despite the great need for support and services and the gap in meeting this need as determined by a coalition of more than 1,000 organizations, agencies and groups.

(4) We would lose protections for immigrant victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. S.1925 acknowledges the needs of immigrant victims by recapturing previously authorized but never-issued U visas if the victims work with law enforcement, as well as strengthening other protections for immigrant victims. H.R.4970 erodes existing laws that protect immigrant victims by giving abusers additional tools with which to harm victims. It limits the U visa program, barring the use of unused visas, and will endanger victims who work with law enforcement to bring perpetrators to justice.

(5) We would lose protections for communities of color. S. 1925 provides a new definition of "culturally specific" programming to clarify Congress' original intent in 2005 to use specific grant funds to support services developed by and targeted to communities of color.

(6) We would lose protections for victims of dating and sexual violence at colleges and universities, who often lack access to the justice system simply because these crimes occur on campus. If there is no final VAWA, we will lose the provisions in S.1925 that would require institutions of higher learning to report annual statistics on domestic violence, dating violence and stalking reported on campus, to develop and publicize clear procedures for handling cases of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking, and to provide support for campus prevention programs teaching all students, male and female, how to help prevent sexual violence and dating violence, including bystander education.

(7) We would lose housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Victims of these crimes frequently need emergency transfers to new housing, in order to remain safe from the actions of an abuser; S.1925 provides such protection. In order to enjoy these rights and avoid unlawful eviction, notice of VAWA rights should be distributed at key times, specifically at eviction. Without adequate notice, victims will never know they have the right not to be evicted based on the actions of their perpetrators or as a result of violence/assault.

(8) We would lose valuable new prevention programs that can reduce the likelihood of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking from occurring in the future. The best way to reduce the prevalence of these crimes is to prevent them from happening in the first place. The new prevention programs proposed in both the House and Senate bills represent a forward-thinking, cost-effective approach to working with children and youth to give them alternatives to violence.

(9) We would lose provisions that would require the Office on Violence Against Women to provide adequate training and notice to grantees to ensure they do not inadvertently use common accounting techniques not approved by federal grantors. Grantees receive funding from many different sources—state grants, private donations, federal funding—and every program has different accounting requirements. Many grantees are confused by the wide range of requirements, and may use the wrong system unintentionally. It is better to proactively educate grantees about financial requirements, in order to help them to keep the best possible records about grant expenditures.

(10) We would lose the grant program consolidations and repeals that will guarantee that more funding goes directly to services, rather than bureaucracy. Both the House and Senate bills contain thoughtful consolidations and repeals of existing law that would make it easier for grantees to apply for funding to do comprehensive work, as well as cut down on program administration costs. In hard economic times, we need to direct every penny to direct services, rather than to administrative overhead.

For more information, go to www.4vawa.org or contact Juley Fulcher at jfulcher@breakthecycle.org or 202-824-0707x106.