



## **The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019**

*The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), enacted in 1994, is landmark legislation responding to our nation's crisis of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.*

### **Enhances Judicial and Law Enforcement Tools to Combat Violence Against Women**

Creates opportunities for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors to participate in legal programs that may result in the expungement of criminal convictions. Reauthorizes the use of the STOP Grants and expands grant funding for programs focused on increasing survivor, law enforcement, community safety, and legal assistance for dependent children in appropriate circumstances.

#### **New:**

- Statistics are currently requested on semi-annual reports in a limited capacity. The 2019 bill creates an audit and survey for Office of Violence Against Women funded District and State Attorney Offices to track the declination of rape cases.
- Includes portions of the Dignity Act to improve criminal justice responses to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

### **Improves Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking**

Preserves dedicated funding to advance services for survivors with disabilities and to preserves funding to educate professionals on abuse later in life.

#### **New:**

- Clarifies equal emphasis on supporting training and capacity building in disability organizations and eligibility criteria and expands who can receive training and education.

### **Provides Services, Protection, and Justice for Young Victims of Violence**

Improves campus grants program to support institutions of higher education in developing and disseminating comprehensive prevention education for all students. Increases length of youth prevention grants and increases funding for engaging men and boys.

#### **New:**

- To address the #MeToo movement, language was added to specify that at least 80 percent of funds go to states for community-based, culturally specific prevention activities regarding sexual harassment in collaboration with state sexual assault coalitions.
- Includes bullying as one of the elements that can be addressed when part of a comprehensive program.
- Adds sexual orientation and gender identity to statistical summary of those served by grants to combat violent crimes on campus.

## **Strengthens the Healthcare System's Response to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence & Sexual Assault**

Funds and improves screening for victimization and perpetration of intimate partner and sexual violence across federally-funded healthcare programs. Provides funding to create a gender-responsive, culturally-relevant, and trauma-informed protocol for screening, assessment, and intervention with sexual assault victims that is disseminated to community-based and federally funded health care as well as intimate partner violence and sexual assault programs.

### **New:**

- Increases the ability to respond to sexual violence and the needs of adult survivors of childhood abuse through education.
- Improves the capacity of campus health centers to recognize and respond to intimate partner violence and sexual assault.

## **Provides Safe Homes for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking**

Increases access to housing protections for survivors and adds language to strengthen confidentiality agreements. VAWA staff are assigned at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and serving at the local level.

### **New:**

- Ensures survivors can maintain housing in the event of a break up with a spouse.
- Extends transitional housing grant opportunities to organizations serving underserved populations.

## **Economic Security for Victims of Violence**

Protects survivors from termination as a result of experiencing violence, being involved in a case, or seeking workplace accommodations.

### **New:**

- Authorizes a GAO study to examine implications and find solutions to address credit considerations for survivors.

## **Preserves Programs for Communities of Color & Enhances Protections for Native American Women**

Preserves programs currently in VAWA for Communities of Color. Restores tribes' abilities to fully respond to sexual violence on their lands.

### **New:**

- Creates a tribal sex offender and protection order registry.
- Reaffirms tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking for all federally recognized Indian tribes and extends it to cover additional crimes.