

Statement of Support for the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA Reauthorization)

Endorsed by NAPABA

April 2012

WHEREAS, since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA), the annual incidence of domestic violence has dropped by more than 50 percent and the rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased 53 percent;¹

WHEREAS, despite these improvements, today three women die everyday because of domestic violence and two million women per year suffer injuries because of domestic violence, with young women between the ages of 16-24 suffering from the highest rates of dating violence and sexual assault;

WHEREAS, Congress determined that reauthorization was necessary in 2000 and again in December 2005, whereupon President George W. Bush signed the most recent version of VAWA into law in January 2006;

WHEREAS, domestic violence and sexual assault disproportionately affects women of color and in particular, women of Asian descent because of cultural, linguistic, and possible immigration issues and where U Visas for victims of crimes and T Visas for victims of human trafficking could be applicable;

WHEREAS, according to the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum's API Institute on Domestic Violence, 41 - 61% of Asian women report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime;²

WHEREAS, VAWA's focus has necessarily expanded since its enactment from domestic violence and sexual assault to also include dating violence and stalking, funding services to

¹ National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. (Decrease is based on data collected between 1993 and 2008).

² The low end of the range is from a study by A. Raj and J. Silverman, Intimate partner violence against South-Asian women in Greater Boston Journal of the *American Medical Women's Association*. 2002; 57(2):111-114. The high end of the range is from a study by M. Yoshihama, Domestic violence against women of Japanese descent in Los Angeles; Two methods of estimating prevalence. *Violence Against Women*. 1999; 5(8): 869-897.

protect adult and teen victims of these crimes, and supporting training on these issues, in order to ensure consistent responses across the country;

WHEREAS, VAWA's success is based on its emphasis on a coordinated community response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, with courts, law enforcement, prosecutors, victim services, and the private bar currently working together in a coordinated effort that did not previously exist on the state and local levels; and, VAWA crucially supports the work of community-based organizations that are engaged in work to end domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, particularly those groups that provide *culturally and linguistically specific services*;

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama's FY2011 budget request was just \$649.36 million for violence against women programs, of which \$457.00 million was for programs administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and \$192.36 million was for programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), a fraction of the total national budget request of \$3.834 trillion (of which \$3.360 trillion was enacted);

WHEREAS, in its first six years alone, VAWA saved taxpayers at least \$14.8 billion in net averted social costs;³ and

WHEREAS, reauthorization of VAWA would enhance:

- National efforts to save lives and save money;
- The success of current programs to meet the full range of victims' needs;
- The ability of judicial, law enforcements and medical systems to provide effective interventions;
- Housing, workplace, and military protections for victims;
- Youth services working in collaboration with schools, college campuses, and other community organizations to protect victims;
- Services for tribal victims;
- Accountability of offenders; and
- Prevention programs to break the cycle of violence.

³ Anderson Clark, K., et al (2002). "A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994." *Violence Against Women*, 8, 417.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that NAPABA

1. Calls upon both the United States Senate and House of Representatives to swiftly pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011.
2. Supports further legislative and administrative efforts to strengthen efforts to end violence against women.
3. Authorizes its President, officers, and staff to communicate the content of this resolution to other diverse bar associations, members of the House of Representatives, members of the U.S. Senate, the press, and to others the NAPABA Board deems suitable to receive the information.

I, the elected president of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, hereby certify that this resolution was enacted by NAPABA on April 18, 2012.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nimesh M. Patel", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nimesh M. Patel
President