



WOMEN IN TRANSITION

WOMEN IN TRANSITION ADVOCACY ALERT
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**ADVOCACY ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: December 20, 2008

DOWNLOADABLE PDF: <http://www.helpwomen.org/pr/DVFunding.pdf>

**Increase Congressional Funding for Domestic Violence
By Calling Members of Congress - Make Your Voice Heard!**

As the new administration makes its transition and finalizes a 2009 federal budget, **now is the time to call** your US Senators and key Representatives to let them know how important it is to increase funding for domestic violence services. **Calls only take minutes**, yet can have a huge impact.

Key Advocacy Issues for Domestic Violence Funding

In general, the request is to:

- 1) **Raise the Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) cap to \$1 billion;**
- 2) **Reauthorize and fully fund the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) at \$175 million;**
- 3) **Fully fund the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).**

Contact Numbers for PA Congressmen

Senator Arlen Specter: (202) 224-4254

Senator Robert Casey: (202) 224-6324

Representative Chaka Fattah (Appropriations Committee member): (202) 225-4001

What to Say or Write

As a Metro Philadelphia resident, I am (calling/writing) on behalf of [Women In Transition](http://www.helpwomen.org), as a donor/volunteer/board member. **Women In Transition provides domestic violence services in Philadelphia**, and I wish to urge you to increase **VOCA, FVPSA, and VAWA** funding for domestic violence services. As the economy worsens and our costs skyrocket, people in our community will nevertheless continue to be terrorized by domestic violence. They will continue to need support services to break free of abuse, and **more funding not less** is needed to meet those needs.

Specifically:

Raise the Victims Against Crime Act (VOCA) Cap to \$1 Billion

• The Victims Against Crime Act (VOCA) Cap must be **raised to \$1 billion**. This funding is derived from criminal fines and penalties, not taxpayer dollars. This fund has nearly \$1.9 billion in it, but **the cap needs to be raised** in order to release that money to community-based victim assistance programs like Women In Transition. In 2008, **the VOCA cap was cut by \$69 million to pay for administrative costs** in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). **Those cuts are devastating** to community-based programs like Women In Transition, which lost \$21,000 and stands to lose another \$20,000 at the beginning of July 2009. Victim service providers across the United States cannot withstand further cuts without a devastating impact on victim services. Raising the VOCA cap for 2009 must be a top priority in this federal budget.

Reauthorize/Fully Fund the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) at \$175 M

• The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) must be **reauthorized and fully funded at \$175 million**. The FVPSA **provides core funding to essential domestic violence** programs across the United States – crisis hotlines, emergency shelter, counseling, legal advocacy. In 2008, the FVPSA **received only \$122 million dollars – \$50 million below its authorized amount**. FVPSA must be fully funded at its authorized level of \$175 million to help sustain vital domestic violence intervention services.

Fully Fund the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

• The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) must be fully funded. Since enacted in 1994, VAWA has had an enormous impact on millions of individuals and families and **has saved billions of dollars in averted social costs**. VAWA includes many programs targeted at specific needs of those victimized by domestic violence – **legal assistance, grants for rural areas, and STOP grants** to engage law enforcement personnel in developing coordinated community responses. Yet, VAWA's potential remains unfulfilled, as it has never been fully funded at its authorized level.

Progress toward ending domestic violence must continue, and Congress must invest in this national effort by supporting these successful and cost-effective programs.

Questions or need follow-up materials for your congressional contact? Please email **Nicole A. Lindemyer**, Policy & Special Projects Manager for Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) at nal@pcadv.org with appropriate contact information and materials requests.

Roberta L. Hacker
Executive Director
Women In Transition

WHO: Women In Transition

WHAT: Needs Your Help In Building Advocacy for Domestic Violence Congressional Support/Funding

About Women In Transition

Since 1971, [Women In Transition](#) has empowered women who are endangered by domestic violence and/or substance abuse to make positive changes in their lives, to eliminate vulnerability to abusive relationships and to build abuse-free lives for themselves and their children.

Active in [community outreach](#), **Women In Transition** also conducts general education about the linkages between domestic violence, substance abuse, child abuse and community violence in an effort to establish safety and justice for vulnerable women and children.

Women In Transition also provides [early intervention and prevention services](#) that include telephone counseling, information and referral services, individual and group empowerment counseling, self-defense and advocacy for women who are endangered by domestic violence and substance abuse. These interrelated direct services strive to empower women to make positive changes in their lives and live free of poverty, violence and addictions to alcohol/drugs.

All services are provided free, without regard to race; gender; age; marital, social or economic status; cultural or religious practices; sexual orientation; political beliefs; or physical abilities.