

Introduced by Senator Yee

January 9, 2013

Senate Resolution No. 8—Relative to violence against women.

1 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was
2 developed with the input of advocates from around the country
3 and from all walks of life, and addresses the real and most
4 important needs of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault,
5 dating violence, and stalking. VAWA is responsive, streamlined,
6 and constitutionally and fiscally sound, while providing strong
7 accountability measures and appropriate federal government
8 oversight; and; and

9 WHEREAS, VAWA represents the voices of women and their
10 families, and the voices of victims, survivors, and advocates; and

11 WHEREAS, VAWA was first enacted in 1994, and has been
12 the centerpiece of the federal government’s efforts to stamp out
13 domestic and sexual violence. Critical programs authorized under
14 VAWA include support for victim services, transitional housing,
15 and legal assistance; and

16 WHEREAS, Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence,
17 and stalking, once considered private matters to be dealt with
18 behind closed doors, have been brought out of the darkness; and

19 WHEREAS, VAWA has been successful because it has had
20 consistently strong, bipartisan support for nearly two decades; and

21 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization
22 Act provided a five-year reauthorization for VAWA programs,
23 and reduced authorized funding levels by more than \$144 million,
24 or 19 percent, from the law’s 2005 authorization; and

25 WHEREAS, While annual rates of domestic violence have
26 dropped more than 50 percent, domestic violence remains a serious

1 issue. Every day in the United States, three women are killed by
2 abusive husbands and partners. In California in 2010, there were
3 166,361 domestic violence calls, including more than 65,000 that
4 involved a weapon; and

5 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization
6 Act included several updates and improvements to the law,
7 including the following:

8 (a) An emphasis on the need to effectively respond to sexual
9 assault crime by adding new purpose areas and a 25 percent
10 set-aside in the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and
11 Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program
12 (STOP Program) and the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and
13 Enforcement of Protection Orders Program.

14 (b) Improvements in tools to prevent domestic violence
15 homicides by training law enforcement, victim service providers,
16 and court personnel to identify and manage high-risk offenders
17 and connecting high-risk victims to crisis intervention services.

18 (c) Improvements in responses to the high rate of violence
19 against women in tribal communities by strengthening concurrent
20 tribal criminal jurisdiction over perpetrators who assault Indian
21 spouses and dating partners in Indian countries.

22 (d) Measures to strengthen housing protections for victims by
23 applying existing housing protections to nine additional federal
24 housing programs.

25 (e) Measures to promote accountability to ensure that federal
26 funds are used for their intended purposes.

27 (f) Consolidation of programs and reductions in authorization
28 levels to address fiscal concerns, and renewed focus on programs
29 that have been most successful.

30 (g) Technical corrections to update definitions throughout the
31 law to provide uniformity and continuity; and

32 WHEREAS, There is a need to maintain services for victims
33 and families at the local, state, and federal levels. Reauthorization
34 would allow existing programs to continue uninterrupted, and
35 would provide for the development of new initiatives to address
36 key areas of concern. These initiatives include the following:

37 (a) Addressing the high rates of domestic violence, dating
38 violence, and sexual assault among women 16 to 24 years of age,
39 inclusive, by combating tolerant youth attitudes toward violence.

1 (b) Improving the response to sexual assault with best practices,
2 training, and communication tools for law enforcement, as well
3 as health care and legal professionals.

4 (c) Preventing domestic violence homicides through enhanced
5 training for law enforcement, advocates, and others who interact
6 with those at risk. A growing number of experts agree that these
7 homicides are predictable, and therefore preventable, if we know
8 the warning signs; now, therefore, be it

9 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California,* That the Senate
10 requests the United States Congress to reintroduce and pass the
11 Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, originally authored
12 by Senators Leahy and Crapo, and ensure the sustainability of vital
13 programs designed to keep women and families safe from violence
14 and abuse; and be it further

15 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
16 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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