

In Response to the President's Draft Budget 3.17.17

This week the President released the framework for his proposed FY18 budget which calls for a cut of 18% to programs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and a 4% cut to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). If these cuts were applied across the board to all programs at HHS and DOJ, approximately 260,000 fewer victims of domestic violence and sexual assault would be able to access shelters and supportive services provided by VAWA and FVPSA funding streams.

The budget framework would also eliminate programs that help victims fleeing domestic violence achieve safety and stability, such as the Legal Services Corporation, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the HOME affordable housing program, and the Community Development Block Grants that fund shelter, housing, economic opportunities and supportive services in communities across the nation. It reduces funding for the important Women's, Infants, and Children Food and Nutrition Service (WIC) program, and would eliminate the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness which has brought federal agencies together to address the strong connection between domestic violence and homelessness.

The National Network to End Domestic Violence reports investments in the federal programs to address domestic and sexual violence have been incredibly successful. VAWA saved an estimated \$12.6 billion in net averted costs in its first six years alone. Reporting of domestic violence has increased as much as 51 percent. The rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 63 percent and the number of women killed by an intimate partner has decreased by 23 percent. A 2010 study demonstrated that an increase in the availability of legal services is associated with a decrease in intimate partner homicide. Another study found that VAWA funds, particularly the ones supporting law enforcement, were associated with a reduction in rape and aggravated assault.

Investments in VAWA and FVPSA have long enjoyed bi-partisan support. We encourage NC members of the Senate and House of Representatives to actively support strong investment in these critical life-saving services.