

## **ACTION ALERT**

Call your Senators today and ask them to support funding for VAWA and VOCA in the Stimulus Package!

We know that as economic conditions worsen, victims are left with fewer resources and the demand for lifesaving services increases.

Recognizing the great need for additional funding for essential domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking programs, on Tuesday, January 27, 2009 the Senate Appropriations Committee passed an economic stimulus bill entitled the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan (S.1).

This bill provides the following funding for critical victim services:

- \$300 million for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), specifically for Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecution (STOP) state formula grants; out of which, \$50 million will be allocated to the VAWA Transitional Housing program; and
- \$100 million for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).

As exciting as this news is, it is only the first step in the process. It is critical that these Senate provisions are protected as the bill moves toward becoming law. Make sure that your Senators hear how important the Senate bill provisions are to victims of violence!

### **What you can do!**

Call your Senators today and encourage him/her to support \$300 million for the VAWA STOP program, \$50 million for the VAWA Transitional Housing program, and for \$100 million for the Victims of Crime Act.

### **Never called your Senator before? Don't worry, it's easy!**

Call 202.224.3121 to be connected to the Capitol Switchboard. Tell them the name of your Senator and they will connect you to their office. When you call your Senator, your call will be answered by a receptionist (often an intern). Tell him or her:

“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a constituent, from [include your state and town].”

- “I urge Senator [last name] to support bill S.1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan which will add much needed crucial funding to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking programs, specifically \$300 million for the VAWA STOP program, \$50 million for the VAWA Transitional Housing program and for \$100 million for the Victims of Crime Act.

- “Thank you.”

Go to <http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/home.htm> complete the form with your home address for a list of your US and State Senators.

### **What happens next?**

- The bill will be considered by the full Senate in the coming weeks.
- Once the Senate has passed their bill, select Members from the House and Senate will meet to combine their different bills into one bill for the President to sign.
- It is likely that the President will sign the bill into law by early to mid-February.

Tuesday was just the beginning. We will need your help to make sure the full Senate agrees to the provisions passed by the Appropriations Committee. The House bill does not provide any specific money for domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking programs. We need to make sure that when the House and the Senate meet to create one bill, that vital funding for victim services are included in the bill.