

**HARTFORD - U.S. Representatives Chris Murphy, Rosa DeLauro, Joe Courtney, and Karen Jarmoc**

from the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, today joined a survivor of domestic violence to highlight alarming domestic violence statistics in Connecticut and called for immediate action to reauthorize and strengthen the Violence Against Women Act.

Congress is currently debating the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which expired last year. House Republicans have introduced their own version of the bill, which significantly weakens many key protections included in the original law.

“Domestic violence is the last issue that should be politicized,” said **Murphy**. “Whether a person is gay, straight, Native American, or an immigrant, victims of domestic violence are victims, plain and simple, and Congress needs to act now to ensure the Violence Against Women Act is as strong as it can be. The Violence Against Women Act has dramatically increased victims’ reporting of crimes and lowered the number of deaths from domestic violence—this Congress must pass it to ensure the safety of the critical programs it funds.”

“At a time when one out of every four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetimes, it is unconscionable that the House Republican Majority would try to roll back the clock like this,” said **DeLauro**. “I remember the days before we had a Violence Against Women Act, and women often suffered in silence. Women need the tools to protect themselves and their families from domestic violence, which is why I am a cosponsor of the House bill introduced by Congresswoman Moore, which ensures those tools are not taken away. The House Republicans should not be putting women at risk with these partisan games. The Senate bill has strong bipartisan support and there is no reason for us not to pass it. It is time to get this done.”

“At a time when the American people are looking for bipartisan solutions and action, the Senate bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act offers a golden opportunity for Democrats and Republicans to work together to protect women from domestic violence,” said **Courtney**. “This vital legislation should not be delayed by the House Republican bill that is totally outside the mainstream of the law enforcement community’s advice.”

**Congressman John Larson** said in a prepared statement, “The Violence Against Women Act is absolutely critical in providing funding and resources needed to help the current victims and prevent future instances of domestic violence all over the country. This is not a Democratic issue or a Republican one, but an effort that all lawmakers must get behind. I urge both the House and Senate to pass a full renewal of this important piece of legislation.”

**Congressman Jim Himes** said in a prepared statement, “The law should protect all victims of violence. We have made much progress in the past few decades, but the Republican version of this legislation discards the long-standing bipartisan commitment to strengthening protections for victims of domestic violence by rolling back long-standing safeguards critical to ensuring victims are able to get the help they need.”

Originally passed in 1994 with overwhelming bi-partisan support, the Violence Against Women Act created the first federal legislation that classifies domestic violence and sexual assault as crimes, and provides federal resources to encourage community-coordinated responses to combating violence.

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