

### Legal Momentum Talking Points on Domestic Violence

#### 1. Domestic Violence Is a National Crisis

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly one-third of women in the United States have been victims of domestic violence. Using statistics from 2013, that is nearly 53 million women.
- The question is not why she stays, the questions are: why does he use violence to control her, and why is she not safe in her intimate partner relationship. Victims have the right to be safe whether they stay or leave.

#### 2. Legal Momentum Works Effectively to End Violence against Women

- We are committed to ensuring a judicial system that holds batterers accountable and keeps victims safe. While we have seen great improvements, we must continue to work together to end violence against women.
- We are calling for elected officials to investigate the misuse of pretrial diversion, where something that is intended for non-violent crimes is being provided to violent offenders, and for an end to this practice.
- We are calling for training programs on domestic violence, for all judges and prosecutors, including all elected district attorneys. Our National Judicial Education Program [has provided such training](#) to thousands of judges, law enforcement personnel, and service providers nationwide.
- We are calling for the establishment of Family Justice Centers nationwide, where victims can get help from police officers, prosecutors, mental health experts, social workers, and faith-based groups under one roof.

#### 3. The Violence Against Women Act and Our Role in Its Creation and Continuation

- VAWA's most enduring gift has been to bring the issues of sexual and domestic violence and stalking to prominence on the public policy agenda. VAWA made interstate domestic violence a crime, enabled enforcement of civil protection orders across state lines, bridged gaps in the law, and provided federal funding that helps coordinate action at the state level by law enforcement, prosecutors, service providers, and courts. This has had an enormous impact on women survivors of sexual assault and domestic abuse nationwide.
- We [advocated for VAWA's initial passage and its continuance](#) and expansion with each reauthorization. Legal Momentum advocated strongly, provided expert testimony, and gained media attention. We succeeded in passing VAWA repeatedly, even when there was significant opposition.

#### 4. Economic Security Is Crucial for DV Survivors

- Victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking experience impacts such as fear, concern for their safety, need for medical care, injury, need for housing services, and missing work or school. Individuals with lower incomes suffer disproportionately from intimate partner violence. Many survivors report missing work or school and a high number indicate a need for legal services. Often, survivors must contend with their abusers' attempts to destabilize their employment, such as by inflicting visible injuries or causing them to miss work unpredictably.

#### 5. Domestic Violence Is a Workplace Issue

- Domestic violence can follow victims to work, spilling over into the workplace when a victim is harassed, receives threatening phone calls, is absent because of injuries, or is less productive due to extreme stress. Yet 65 percent of U.S. workplaces do not have a formal policy that addresses workplace violence.
- We press for workplace protections (including anti-discrimination laws, leave, and unemployment insurance) for survivors of violence. The second reauthorization of VAWA created a National Resource Center on Workplace Violence issues (<http://www.workplacesrespond.org/>). We partner with six other organizations to provide technical assistance to employers and service providers on workplace policies.
- We developed model workplace violence policies asking that victims of domestic and sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking be accommodated. We are working with public and private employers to implement this policy. We are asking the public to promote our model policy.
- Our online [State Law Guides](#) educate the public about the rights of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking survivors in the workplace.
- Our [This Workplace Is a DV-Free Zone Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Bill of Rights poster](#) is free to download and post in workplaces to raise awareness of the rights of survivors in the workplace.