VAVA scripts, talking points, social media posts, and images.

Script for a town hall meeting, call, or email to your Representative:
My name is [your name], and I am calling from [your location and, if you are affiliated with a domestic violence or sexual assault program, the name of your program]. I urge [“you” if at a town hall, /your Representative’s name if calling or emailing] to support the bipartisan H.R.1585, the Violence Against Women Act of 2019. The Violence Against Women Act is one of the pillars of the federal response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. [Tell your Representative why VAVA has been so important to your community or, if you have a story you feel comfortable sharing, share your experience]. Every time VAVA has been reauthorized, it has been strengthened based on our increased understanding of gender-based violence. The Me Too era, when survivors are clamoring for change, is not the time to roll back important protections or even to maintain the status quo. H.R.1585 maintains protections for all victims, makes vital investments in sexual assault prevention, ensures sexual predators who prey on Native women can be held accountable, protects victims of domestic violence from intimate partner homicide, and increases victims’ access to safe housing and economic stability. As a constituent, I urge you to co-sponsor and support H.R.1585. As part of your support, I also urge you to oppose any motion to recommit.

Script for a town hall meeting, call, or email to your Senators:
My name is [your name], and I am calling from [your location and, if you are affiliated with a domestic violence or sexual assault program, the name of your program]. I urge [“you” if at a town hall, /your Senator’s name if calling or emailing] to support a bill in the Senate that is based on the bipartisan H.R.1585, the Violence Against Women Act of 2019. The Violence Against Women Act is one of the pillars of the federal response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. [Tell your Senator why VAVA has been so important to your community or, if you have a story you feel comfortable sharing, share your experience]. Every time VAVA has been reauthorized, it has been strengthened based on our increased understanding of gender-based violence. The Me Too era, when survivors are clamoring for change, is not the time to roll back important protections or even to maintain the status quo. Any bill coming through the Senate must be similar to H.R.1585, which maintains protections for all victims, makes vital investments in sexual assault prevention, ensures sexual predators who prey
on Native women can be held accountable, protects victims of domestic violence from intimate partner homicide, and increases victims’ access to safe housing and economic stability. As a constituent, I urge you to co-sponsor and support a Senate bill substantially similar to the House’s H.R.1585.

**Talking points for op-eds and letters to the editor:**

- The Violence Against Women Act is one of pillars of the federal response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking (“the four crimes”).
- What VAWA does:
  - VAWA provides grants to transform law enforcement’s and the legal system’s response to the four crimes by bringing together victim service organizations, law enforcement, community-based organizations, prosecutors, judges, and other stakeholders to develop coordinated community responses;
  - VAWA funds prevention through a number of grants that approach prevention from different angles;
  - VAWA funds services to victims of the four crimes, including crisis intervention, domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy, shelter services, legal services and advocacy, housing for survivors, community-based interventions, and other important services;
  - VAWA funds population-specific programming, including programs designed to meet the needs of communities of color, older adults, rural communities, people with disabilities, young adults, LGBTQ people, and others; and
  - VAWA provides critical legal protections to all survivors.
- VAWA has transformed America’s response to the four crimes.
  - Since 1994, when VAWA was first passed, the rate of domestic violence has decreased 63%.
  - VAWA has strengthened victims’ involvement in the criminal legal system, including their likelihood of reaching out for help.
    - A study of Kentucky survivors found that when survivors seek protective orders, threats to harm or kill the survivors decreased by nearly 50%, moderate physical abuse decreased by 61%, and severe physical abuse decreased by 50%.
    - Research shows that sexual assault response teams - a form of coordinated community response - improve legal outcomes, the experience of the victim, and multidisciplinary cooperation.
    - VAWA-funded court and law enforcement reforms have improved access to safety and justice for survivors, increased offender accountability, and decreased recidivism.
○ VAWA-funded prevention programming has been empirically demonstrated to reduce sexual violence.
○ Between 2014 and 2016, VAWA funding provided more than one million victim services for survivors of the four crimes, including almost 2 million shelter nights, 600,000 hotline calls, victim advocacy for almost 300,000 unique individuals, and legal services for almost 100,000 survivors. Every six months in that period, VAWA funding served an average of 112,000 primary survivors and their children.
○ VAWA saves money. A 2002 study found that in its first five years, VAWA saved $15 billion in averted costs.
○ VAWA has ended impunity for domestic abusers who prey on Native women on tribal lands.
○ VAWA protects diverse survivors, including LGBTQ survivors, older adult survivors, survivors with disabilities, immigrant survivors, Native survivors, and others.

● We need to do more
○ While the four crimes have decreased significantly since 1994 when VAWA was first passed, rates of violence are still far too high:
   ■ One in five women and one in 59 men are raped in their lifetimes;
   ■ One in four women and one in seven men experience severe physical abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetimes;
   ■ One in six women and one in nineteen men experience stalking in their lifetimes;
   ■ A woman is murdered by a male intimate partner with a gun every sixteen hours;
   ■ The four crimes disproportionately impact women and members of underserved communities.
○ H.R.1585, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019, is based on extensive outreach to survivors, direct service providers, and other stakeholders. It meets the needs of diverse survivors by:
   ■ Maintaining vital protections for all survivors;
   ■ Investing in prevention;
   ■ Ensuring victim service providers can use VAWA funding to help victims experiencing a range of domestic violence behaviors, not just physical abuse;
   ■ Ending impunity for non-Native perpetrators of sexual assault, child abuse co-occurring with domestic violence, stalking, sex trafficking, and assaults on tribal law enforcement officers on tribal lands;
   ■ Improving access to safe housing and economic independence;
Protecting dating violence from abusers with firearms;

Improving the healthcare system’s and workplace responses to the four crimes; and

Improving enforcement of court-ordered firearm relinquishment.

Summary of H.R.1585, the bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019:

- Invests in prevention;
- Ends impunity for non-Native perpetrators of sexual assault, child abuse co-occurring with domestic violence, stalking, sex trafficking, and assaults on tribal law enforcement officers on tribal lands;
- Improves enforcement of court orders that require adjudicated domestic abusers to relinquish their firearms;
- Improves access to housing for victims and survivors;
- Protects victims of dating violence from firearm homicide;
- Helps survivors gain and maintain economic independence;
- Updates the federal definition of domestic violence for the purposes of VAWA grants only to acknowledge the full range of abuse victims suffer (does not impact the criminal definition of domestic violence);
- Maintains existing protections for all survivors; and
- Improves the healthcare system’s response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

Hashtags: #VAWA19 #VAWA4ALL #HR1585

Sample Social Media Images

Sample Facebook Posts
• **For House Members:** The Violence Against Women Act has been one of the cornerstones of America’s response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking for the past quarter-century. Every time Congress has reauthorized VAWA, they have strengthened it to improve protections and access to safety and justice for all survivors. VAWA has expired, and it is time to renew it with modest but vital improvements. In the Me Too era, we cannot afford to maintain the status quo or, even worse, to roll back hard-fought gains. I call on you to co-sponsor and vote for bipartisan #HR1585, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019, and to reject any motion to recommit. #VAWA19 #VAWA4ALL

• **For Senators:** Violence Against Women Act has been one of the cornerstones of America’s response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking for the past quarter-century. Every time Congress has reauthorized VAWA, they have strengthened it to improve protections and access to safety and justice for all survivors. VAWA has expired, and it is time to renew it with modest but vital improvements. In the Me Too era, we cannot afford to maintain the status quo or, even worse, to roll back hard-fought gains. I call on you to push for and support a Senate bill with the same content as #HR1585, the Violence Against Women Act of 2019. #VAWA19 #VAWA4ALL

**Sample Tweets**

• The bipartisan VAWA (#HR1585), introduced by @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz, includes key enhancements for all survivors of domestic and sexual violence. @Rephandle can I count on you to help get this bill across the finish line?! #VAWA19 #VAWA4ALL

• The Violence Against Women Act (#HR1585) is a bipartisan bill. @Rephandle can I count on you to co-sponsor this #VAWA4ALL survivors? #VAWA19

• I’m with @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz to pass #VAWA4ALL because communities need access to sexual assault prevention! @RepHandle, please co-sponsor #VAWA19 (#HR1585)

• We’re with @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz to pass #VAWA4ALL because survivors need housing protections! @RepHandle, please co-sponsor the ‘Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019’ (#HR1585)!

• I’m with @RepKarenBass & @RepBrianFitz to pass #VAWA4ALL because native survivors deserve justice! Please co-sponsor @RepHandle #HR1585 #VAWA2019

• @RepHandle, violence against women happens in our community, too. Reauthorize #VAWA4ALL and support prevention and education programs that keep us safe! #HR1585
• Violence doesn’t discriminate and neither should our laws! Support #VAWA19 and ensure Native survivors of gender-based violence have access to justice on tribal lands! #VAWA4ALL #HR1585
• Violence doesn’t discriminate and neither should our laws! Support #VAWA19 and ensure incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence have access to trauma-informed care! #VAWA4ALL #HR1585
• Support #VAWA19 and ensure survivors of domestic abuse access to safe housing! #VAWA4ALL #HR1585
• Homicide reduction initiatives are key if we are going to reduce domestic violence fatalities! Support #HR1585 - #VAWA19 - and help prevent firearm-involved intimate partner homicides #VAWA4ALL
UPDATE: VAWA INTRODUCTION

A bipartisan version of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), H.R. 1585 has been introduced.

The bill, endorsed by the NTF, includes critical enhancements critical enhancements including increased funding for prevention programs, homicide reduction policies, and protections for Native survivors.

What can you do?

Ask your rep to co-sponsor!

VAWA is cosponsored by Congresswoman Karen Bass (D-CA) and Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). Contact your representatives to ask for their support on this critical bill.
Hear the voices of survivors: VAWA needs improvements.

Support H.R. 1585
#VAWA19
Survivors need real change, not just an extension of current law.

Support H.R. 1585
#VAWA19