

May 15, 2012

Dear Representative,

As you consider reauthorizing legislation to protect women from domestic violence and human trafficking, please reject any bill that would weaken the level of protection available under current law. Violence against women is an offense to women, to our society, and to our Creator. While progress has been made, much more work remains to protect victims from attack.

Among the most vulnerable are those women whose immigration status depends upon the cooperation of an abuser. Tragically, some of those who come here as fiancés or spouses of U.S. citizens find themselves trapped in abusive relationships. On top of all the dynamics of abuse, they fear retaliation and possible deportation to countries where the authorities may offer even less protection than is available to them here.

That is why we are encouraged by key provisions of the bipartisan agreement emerging from the Senate, which increases the number of U visas available to those who cooperate with law enforcement. In contrast, the version that has emerged from the House Judiciary Committee rolls back important existing provisions under U.S. law, and fails to include improvements agreed upon in the Senate.

We understand that the House may be voting on a bill as early as tomorrow. We urge that sections 801, 802 and 806 of the bill, as reported by the Committee, be struck from the bill. We also ask that the Senate provision increasing the number of U visas be adopted.

As you consider amendments to improve the bill, please do not add additional bureaucratic or procedural hurdles that would delay justice for those women who have already suffered so much. Think about the protection that you would want to be available for your own daughters, and make that the law of the land. Make this a law that all Americans can be proud of, that will bring abusers to justice and bring prompt and effective relief to their victims.

Sincerely,



Galen Carey
Vice President, Government Relations