

# ICYMI: New York Times VAWA Editorial

**From:** The Honorable Gwen Moore

**Date:** 5/14/2012

Dear Colleague,

In case you missed it — please see below for yesterday’s New York Times editorial on the Violence Against Women Act.

Sincerely,

/s

/s

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

Editorial

## Backward on Domestic Violence

Published: May 13, 2012

In an all-too-rare show of bipartisanship, 15 Senate Republicans joined with the Democratic majority last month to [reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act](#), the landmark 1994 law that is key to efforts against domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Unfortunately, the lopsided 68-to-31 Senate vote halted G.O.P. opponents only temporarily. The House Judiciary Committee last week approved its version of the reauthorization bill, which not only omits improvements the Senate bill made to the law but also removes existing protections for immigrant women, putting them at greater risk of domestic and sexual abuse.

The Senate’s measure ensures that victims are not denied services because they are gay or transgender. It also strives to ensure that domestic violence crimes committed by non-Indian men in tribal communities are prosecuted. The Senate bill also would modestly expand the availability of special U-visas for undocumented immigrants who are victims of domestic violence. That move was supported by law enforcement to encourage victims to come forward and testify against their abusers.

The regressive House alternative removes these and other improvements, including new protections for students on college campuses. The House measure would eliminate a confidentiality requirement in current law that protects the identity of immigrant women who

file domestic violence complaints against a spouse who is a citizen or legal resident and allows the women to apply for legal status on their own.

House Republicans claim there is a big fraud problem in this area, but there is no hard evidence of that. And their plan to end the centralized handling of these issues by a Vermont-based office would undermine the government's ability to detect untruthful stories.

House members on both sides of the aisle who are serious about combating domestic violence must work to defeat this atrocious bill. If that fails, the Senate will need to insist on fixing it during the reconciliation process.

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