



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

July 30, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Office of the Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

I am writing to you regarding my strong support for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011 is essential for New York to continue its strong commitment to combating the national domestic violence epidemic, and ratifies our national determination to ensure that all victims of domestic violence can and will receive assistance.

Just this month in New York, our Democratic Assembly, Republican Senate and my office came together to work through our differences to strengthen New York's Domestic Violence Laws. It is my sincere hope that the House and Senate will do the same and act quickly to resolve differences to move toward enacting this critical piece of legislation.

Since being enacted in 1994, VAWA has supported coordinated responses to domestic violence and sexual assault across the state. We used VAWA funds at the state level to create a model domestic violence policy for probation officers that has become a national model; to provide technology-supported training for police, probation, and parole officers across our state at no cost to struggling localities; and to support our vital domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions. Statewide local programs have strengthened their coordination, developed innovative programs, and together ensured that we have made great progress in reducing the harms of domestic violence and sexual assault in our state. Funds have supported Domestic Abuse Response Teams, Sexual Assault Response Teams, Sexual Assault Examiner programs, dedicated law enforcement and prosecutor efforts, as well as domestic violence and integrated domestic violence courts.

Despite these achievements, there is more to be done. Domestic violence and sexual assault are serious social problems that continue to distress thousands of New Yorkers annually. Every year our police officers respond to almost half a million calls related to domestic violence, our courts issue over 300,000 orders of protection in domestic violence cases, and over 15,000



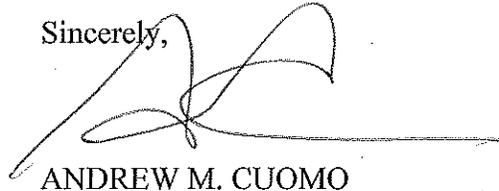
individuals seek emergency shelter in our system because they are not safe at home. Reauthorizing VAWA is critical to continuing valuable programs.

Furthermore, I urge you to consider accepting a provision that ensures all victims are included in this reauthorization. This would be consistent with New York State's commitment to respecting the human rights of all individuals, especially those in marginalized communities. New York recently expanded access to civil orders of protection to a broader group of victims, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Genderqueer, teen and elder victims. All of the residents of our state deserve to be safe in their homes and their relationships.

Without this legislation, already fiscally-strained communities would be obliged to sustain radical programmatic losses that could make them unable to manage the cases of domestic violence, possibly causing an increase in this crime. New York alone lost three police officers last year responding to domestic violence calls, in addition to the 89 individuals who were murdered by their partners.

I strongly urge the House and Senate to work together quickly so New York can continue to support and assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew M. Cuomo', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

ANDREW M. CUOMO

CC:

Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Senator Harry Reid
Senator Patrick Leahy
Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi