



## **FEW Fact Sheet**

### **The Violence Against Women Authorization Legislation**

**Background:** The United States House of Representatives voted to help victims of sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking by passing the bill to reauthorize the **2019 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA/H.R. 1585)**, introduced by Representative Karen Bass (D-CA).

The Violence Against Women Act was originally created in 1994, with its goal to fight domestic violence and sexual assault. The bill's renewal would continue to fund programs to prevent gender-based crimes and help the victims of these crimes recover through expanded housing and jobless benefits. The bill also works to improve services to children who are exposed to domestic violence and more.

**H.R. 1585**, VAWA 2019 contains many important improvements that will benefit victims of violence around the country including:

- Housing protections for survivors of sexual assault.
- A new position at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to address domestic violence.
- Enhancements to the criminal justice response to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.
- Programs that help survivors gain and maintain economic independence.

VAWA 2019 now moves to the US Senate. Unfortunately, there is no companion bill in the Senate.

**FEW's Position:** FEW urges the Senate to ensure that **H.R. 1585**, the Violence Against Women Act is adopted and passed as soon as possible! This is a critical next step in order to establish important improvements and secure stable funding for VAWA for the next five years.



## **TALKING POINTS:**

- In the U.S., one in five women will be raped at some point in their lives. An average of 20 people are physically abused by an intimate partner every minute.
- Women ages 18 to 24 are the most commonly abused by an intimate partner, and nearly 27 percent of women in college have experienced unwanted sexual contact.
- In 2018, advocates tracked at least 26 deaths of transgender people in the U.S. due to fatal violence, the majority of whom were Black transgender women. The bill allows transgender individuals to be accommodated by the gender they identify with and allowed to enter a shelter.
- Furthermore, the Violence Against Women Act ensures that rape prevention and education programs are properly funded and continue to take place on college campuses.