

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

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Supporting the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should raise awareness of domestic violence in the United States and its devastating effects on families.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KOHL, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. CLINTON, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REID, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KYL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. DASCHLE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should raise awareness of domestic violence in the United States and its devastating effects on families.

Whereas 2004 marks the tenth anniversary of the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–322, 108 Stat. 1902);

Whereas since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, communities have made significant progress

in reducing domestic violence such that between 1993 and 2001, the incidents of nonfatal domestic violence fell 49 percent;

Whereas since created by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, the National Domestic Violence Hotline has answered over 1,000,000 calls;

Whereas States have passed over 660 State laws pertaining to domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault;

Whereas the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 has helped make strides toward breaking the cycle of violence, but there remains much work to be done;

Whereas domestic violence affects women, men, and children of all racial, social, religious, ethnic, and economic groups in the United States;

Whereas on average, more than 3 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States every day;

Whereas women who have been abused are much more likely to suffer from chronic pain, diabetes, depression, unintended pregnancies, substance abuse, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

Whereas only about 10 percent of primary care physicians routinely screen for domestic violence during new patient visits, and 9 percent routinely screen during periodic checkups;

Whereas each year, about 324,000 pregnant women in the United States are battered by the men in their lives, leading to pregnancy complications, including low weight gain, anemia, infections, and first and second trimester bleeding;

Whereas every 2 minutes, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted;

Whereas almost 25 percent of women surveyed had been raped or physically assaulted by a spouse or boyfriend at some point in their lives;

Whereas in 2002 alone, 250,000 women and girls older than the age of 12 were raped or sexually assaulted;

Whereas 1 out of every 12 women has been stalked in her lifetime;

Whereas some cultural norms, economics, language barriers, and limited access to legal services and information may make some immigrant women particularly vulnerable to abuse;

Whereas 1 in 5 adolescent girls in the United States becomes a victim of physical or sexual abuse, or both, in a dating relationship;

Whereas 40 percent of girls ages 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend;

Whereas annually, approximately 8,800,000 children in the United States witness domestic violence;

Whereas witnessing violence is a risk factor for having long-term physical and mental health problems (including substance abuse), being a victim of abuse, and becoming a perpetrator of abuse;

Whereas a boy who witnesses his father's domestic violence is 10 times more likely to engage in domestic violence than a boy from a nonviolent home;

Whereas the cost of domestic violence, including rape, physical assault, and stalking, exceeds \$5,800,000,000 each

year, of which \$4,100,000,000 is spent on direct medical and mental health care services;

Whereas 44 percent of the Nation's mayors identified domestic violence as a primary cause of homelessness;

Whereas 25 to 50 percent of abused women reported they lost a job due, in part, to domestic violence;

Whereas there is a need to increase the public awareness about, and understanding of, domestic violence and the needs of battered women and their children;

Whereas the month of October 2004 has been recognized as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a month for activities furthering awareness of domestic violence; and

Whereas the dedication and successes of those working tirelessly to end domestic violence and the strength of the survivors of domestic violence should be recognized: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of National
3 Domestic Violence Awareness Month; and

4 (2) expresses the sense of the Senate that Con-
5 gress should continue to raise awareness of domestic
6 violence in the United States and its devastating im-
7 pact on families.