

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 696

To establish grants to improve and study the National Domestic Violence
Hotline.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 9, 2005

Mr. CONYERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish grants to improve and study the National
Domestic Violence Hotline.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Domestic Violence
5 Connections Campaign Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) More than 500 men and women call the Na-
9 tional Domestic Violence Hotline every day to get

1 immediate, informed, and confidential assistance to
2 help deal with family violence.

3 (2) The National Domestic Violence Hotline
4 service is available, toll-free, 24 hours a day and 7
5 days a week, with bilingual staff, access to trans-
6 lators in 150 languages, and a TTY line for the
7 hearing-impaired.

8 (3) With access to over 5,000 shelters and serv-
9 ice providers in the United States, Puerto Rico, and
10 the United States Virgin Islands, the National Do-
11 mestic Violence Hotline provides crisis intervention
12 and immediately connects callers with sources of
13 help in their local community.

14 (4) The National Domestic Violence Hotline,
15 which was created by the Violence Against Women
16 Act and is located in Austin, Texas, answered its
17 first call on February 21, 1996, and answered its
18 one millionth call on August 4, 2003.

19 (5) Approximately 60 percent of the callers in-
20 dicate that calling the Hotline is their first attempt
21 to address a domestic violence situation and that
22 they have not called the police or any other support
23 services.

24 (6) Between 2000 and 2003, there was a 27
25 percent increase in call volume.

1 (7) Due to high call volume and limited re-
2 sources, approximately 26,000 calls to the Hotline
3 went unanswered in 2002 due to long hold times or
4 busy signals.

5 (8) Widespread demand for the Hotline service
6 continues. The Department of Justice reported that
7 over 18,000 acts of violence were committed by inti-
8 mate partners in the United States each day during
9 2001. An average of 3 women are murdered every
10 day in the Nation by their husbands or boyfriends.

11 (9) Working with outdated telephone and com-
12 puter equipment creates many challenges for the
13 National Domestic Violence Hotline.

14 (10) Improving technology infrastructure at the
15 National Domestic Violence Hotline and training ad-
16 vocates, volunteers, and other staff on upgraded
17 technology will drastically increase the Hotline's
18 ability to answer more calls quickly and effectively.

19 (11) Partnerships between the public sector and
20 the private sector are an effective way of providing
21 necessary technology improvements to the National
22 Domestic Violence Hotline.

23 (12) The Connections Campaign is a project
24 that unites nonprofit organizations, major corpora-
25 tions, and Federal agencies to launch a major new

1 initiative to help ensure that the National Domestic
2 Violence Hotline can answer every call with up-
3 graded, proficient, and sophisticated technology
4 tools.

5 **SEC. 3. TECHNOLOGY GRANT TO NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIO-**
6 **LENCE HOTLINE.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, in con-
8 sultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
9 ices, shall award a grant to the National Domestic Vio-
10 lence Hotline.

11 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—The grant awarded under sub-
12 section (a) shall be used to provide technology and tele-
13 communication training and assistance for advocates, vol-
14 unteers, staff, and others affiliated with the Hotline so
15 that such persons are able to effectively use improved
16 equipment made available through the Connections Cam-
17 paign.

18 **SEC. 4. RESEARCH GRANT TO STUDY NATIONAL DOMESTIC**
19 **VIOLENCE HOTLINE.**

20 (a) GRANT AUTHORIZED.—Not later than 6 months
21 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney Gen-
22 eral, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and
23 Human Services and the National Domestic Violence Hot-
24 line, shall award a grant to a university or other research
25 institution with demonstrated experience and expertise

1 with domestic violence issues to conduct a study of the
2 National Domestic Violence Hotline for the purpose of
3 conducting the research described under subsection (c),
4 and for the input, interpretation, and dissemination of re-
5 search data.

6 (b) APPLICATION.—Each university or research insti-
7 tution desiring to receive a grant under this section shall
8 submit an application to the Attorney General, at such
9 time, in such manner, and accompanied by such additional
10 information as the Attorney General, in consultation with
11 the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Na-
12 tional Domestic Violence Hotline, may reasonably require.

13 (c) ISSUES TO BE STUDIED.—The study described
14 in subsection (a) shall—

15 (1) compile statistical and substantive informa-
16 tion about calls received by the Hotline since its in-
17 ception, or a representative sample of such calls,
18 while maintaining the confidentiality of Hotline call-
19 ers;

20 (2) interpret the data compiled under para-
21 graph (1)—

22 (A) to determine the trends, gaps in serv-
23 ices, and geographical areas of need; and

1 (B) to assess the trends and gaps in serv-
2 ices to underserved communities and the mili-
3 tary community; and

4 (3) gather other important information about
5 domestic violence.

6 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
7 of enactment of this Act, the grantee conducting the study
8 under this section shall submit a report on the results of
9 such study to Congress and the Attorney General.

10 **SEC. 5. GRANT TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF DOMES-**
11 **TIC VIOLENCE ISSUES.**

12 (a) GRANT AUTHORIZED.—Not later than 6 months
13 after the submission of the report required under section
14 4(d), the Attorney General, in consultation with the Sec-
15 retary of Health and Human Services and the National
16 Domestic Violence Hotline, shall award a grant to an ex-
17 perience organization to conduct a public awareness cam-
18 paign to increase the public's understanding of domestic
19 violence issues and awareness of the National Domestic
20 Violence Hotline.

21 (b) APPLICATION.—Each organization desiring to re-
22 ceive a grant under this section shall submit an application
23 to the Attorney General, at such time, in such manner,
24 and accompanied by such additional information as the
25 Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of

1 Health and Human Services and the National Domestic
2 Violence Hotline, may reasonably require.

3 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
5 priated, for each of the fiscal years 2006 and 2007—

6 (1) \$500,000 to carry out section 3;

7 (2) \$250,000 to carry out section 4; and

8 (3) \$800,000 to carry out section 5.

9 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Any amounts appropriated pur-
10 suant to the authority of subsection (a) shall remain avail-
11 able until expended.

12 (c) NONEXCLUSIVITY.—Nothing in this section shall
13 be construed to limit or restrict the National Domestic Vi-
14 olence Hotline to apply for and obtain Federal funding
15 from any other agency or department or any other Federal
16 grant program.

17 (d) NO CONDITION ON APPROPRIATIONS.—Amounts
18 appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) shall not be con-
19 sidered amounts appropriated for purposes of the condi-
20 tions imposed under section 316(g)(2) of the Family Vio-
21 lence Prevention and Services Act (42 U.S.C.
22 10416(g)(2)).

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