

head. The girl survived, but Officer Schneider literally gave his life to save another. I attended that funeral, and I will never forget the heartbreaking scene of his two young sons walking down the church aisle with the little girl, his daughter, in a blue dress covered with stars. I think it reminds all of us that domestic violence just doesn't hurt the immediate victim, it hurts entire families, entire communities.

This has never been a partisan bill. It is crucial to pass this bill. We have made a lot of progress over the years, and we have been able to work across the aisle to build on VAWA's success. That is something that means a lot to me, and it certainly means a lot to the millions of people who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault every single year.

I urge my colleagues to support our efforts to bring this bill to the floor quickly. We can pass it this week. We can provide desperately needed help to victims of domestic assault, domestic violence, and other such crimes.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of S. 1789 but no earlier than Wednesday, April 25, the Senate adopt the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 312, S. 1925.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today marks the beginning of the 31st annual National Crime Victims' Rights Week. It is a time to recognize the losses faced by victims of crimes and their families and to acknowledge the efforts being made to help them recover and rebuild their lives in the wake of tragedy. It is a time to reflect on all we have accomplished and focus on what we have to yet do to help victims.

Of course, one of the best tools for delivering that help is the Crime Victims Fund. Unfortunately, in recent months, some have sought to violate the Victims of Crime Act. They want to take money out of the trust fund for purposes and programs not authorized by the Victims of Crime Act. I have worked with Senators from both sides of the aisle. We have been able to stop

this raid on crime victims' funding. I wish to commend Senators MIKULSKI and HUTCHISON, the chair and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science of the Committee on Appropriations for their important efforts in this regard in the appropriations bill we reported to the Senate last week.

The Senate Appropriations Committee, on which I serve, has reported a bill that preserves the Crime Victims Fund, and we succeeded in increasing the funding next year for victims' compensation and assistance to \$775 million. To be able to increase Federal assistance by \$70 million from last year's cap is extraordinary in these economic times, and it is an indication here in the Senate of our commitment to crime victims. This is a matter on which I have worked with Senator CRAPO as well as Senator MIKULSKI over the years. I appreciate their leadership in this effort.

The Crime Victims Fund is not taxpayers' money. It comes from penalties and fines. It comes from wrongdoers. We designed it to help victims of crime. We created it as a trust fund for crime victims' needs and services. I have tried to respect the trust fund and to protect it, to ensure that it is used and available for crime victims and their families who depend on its support in times of need. We all know the States are being forced to tighten their belts, and when they do, victims' services are being cut all over the country. Without the Federal assistance from this trust fund, victims' compensation programs and victims' assistance programs and services will be unavailable to many.

Another important law that strengthens crime victims' rights and improves crime victims' services is currently pending before the Judiciary Committee. The Justice For All Reauthorization Act strengthens the rights guaranteed to crime victims in the criminal justice process and ensures that basic services, like the rapid testing of rape kits, help victims receive the justice, safety, and closure they deserve. I look forward to working with Senators from both sides of the aisle to move that legislation forward as well.

Currently pending before the Senate is the majority leader's motion to proceed against the Violence Against Women's Act, S. 1925. I introduced this legislation with Senator CRAPO last year. We have 61 bipartisan cosponsors from both parties. When we enacted the Violence Against Women Act nearly 18 years ago, it sent a powerful message that we will not tolerate crime against women and forever altered the way our Nation combats domestic and sexual violence. Our legislation offers support to the victims of these terrible crimes and helps them find safety and rebuild their lives. The bill we will debate this week is based on the recommendations of victims and the tireless professionals who work with them every day.

April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month and our bill takes the important step of focusing increased attention on sexual assaults, including those against the most vulnerable among us.

As I listened to Senator MURRAY, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator SHAHEEN, and Senator GILLIBRAND—and, as a matter of fact, I spoke with Senator HAGAN last week about the pending motion to proceed to the VAWA reauthorization legislation—I thought how fortunate we all are to serve with them and with Senators MIKULSKI, BOXER, SNOWE, LANDRIEU, COLLINS, STABENOW, CANTWELL, MURKOWSKI, MCCASKILL, KLOBUCHAR, and AYOTTE. In fact, 16 women senators are cosponsors of our Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, and their input has strengthened this critical legislation. I appreciate their strong bipartisan support for this measure and their willingness to speak out time and again on the need to pass this bill without delay.

We recently honored the senior Senator from Maryland for her services as the longest-serving woman Senator and as the woman who has also served the longest in Congress. I can remember back before 1993, when Senator Carol Mosely Braun became the first woman to serve as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. We are fortunate now to have both Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator KLOBUCHAR as active members of our Committee.

I remember when nine women Senators joined together to contribute to the book "Nine and Counting" about their paths to the U.S. Senate. These women have served as role models for many other young women and young girls. Even as Senator Clinton has gone on to become our Secretary of State, there have been other changes. Six of the nine Senators who were subjects of the book in 2001 still serve in this institution today. They have been joined by nine additional women Senators from around the country. This book, "Nine and Counting," was a title for looking to the future. Today, 17 women serve in the U.S. Senate. That is a great step forward. They have farther to go, of course, but it is a lot better than when I came to the Senate when we had no women serving. Sixteen of them have joined from both sides of the aisle to bring their leadership and their strong support, but also their experience, to the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

Our bill includes a number of provisions they have championed and suggested. To will give one example, our bill includes the provisions that Senator KLOBUCHAR and Senator HUTCHISON suggested and introduced as the Stalkers Act of 2011. That provision is new to VAWA. It would not have been included if we had simply introduced a one-sentence reauthorization of VAWA rather than a comprehensive bill. I thought it was a good provision, intended to update the Federal antistalking statute to capture the

more modern forms of communication that perpetrators use to stalk their victims.

In the spirit of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, our reauthorization bill takes steps to recognize victims' needs that are not being served and find ways to help them. That approach is not radical or extreme. The fact that the bill reaches more victims should not be a basis for partisan division; it is something we ought to celebrate. I have said on the floor before, a victim is a victim is a victim.

In my earlier career I would go to a crime scene at 3 o'clock in the morning with the police, as the chief law enforcement officer of our county. We might have a badly battered woman—if she survived; sometimes the victim did not survive—but I never heard the police say, “Well, if we are going to do something on this, we have to figure out whether this victim is a Democrat or a Republican, or we have to figure out whether this victim is gay or straight, or we have to figure out”—no. They said, “For this victim, let us find out who did this and let's get them and let's see what we can do,” or if the victim is still alive, what we could do to protect the victim. That is what the Violence Against Women Act has always done and what I have tried to do for crime victims for many years.

As we have done on every VAWA reauthorization bill, we have learned from past experience how to make it better and now we make it better by taking responsible and moderate steps, in this case to protect immigrant and native women, and ensuring services to victims regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, again under the mantra “a victim is a victim is a victim.”

At the same time, we recognize the difficult economic times and the need to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent responsibly. That is why the bill consolidates 13 programs into 4 in an effort to reduce duplication and bureaucratic barriers. It cuts the authorization level for VAWA by more than \$135 million a year, a decrease of nearly 20 percent from the last reauthorization. We will still provide sufficient authority to fund VAWA programs at over \$400 million a year, which is consistent with the funding level provided in the appropriations bill for the coming year. Our legislation also includes significant accountability provisions, including audit requirements, enforcement mechanisms, and restrictions on grantees and costs.

Since its introduction last November, more than 700 State and national organizations have written to endorse the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. They are 200 national organizations, including 500 State and local organizations—the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, the National Association of Attorneys General, the National District Attorneys' Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, the International

Association of Chiefs of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and 25 national religious organizations. Last week, the mayors of three of the Nation's largest cities—New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles—wrote to the Senate urging us to pass the VAWA reauthorization. We have heard from 47 State attorneys general, Republican and Democratic alike, urging Senate passage of this legislation. That is because they recognize this Federal law is meaningful and that this reauthorization addresses the ongoing, unmet needs of victims in their States.

I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks these letters be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. LEAHY. In fact, today I was advised by Bruce Cohen in my office that we have received the statement of administrative position. It is a very strong statement from the White House, and it is a strong statement in support of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 2.)

Mr. LEAHY. I am glad we are finally moving to this.

The last two reauthorizations, each one an improvement on the one before, passed this body unanimously. We should do the same. It is not a partisan issue. I ask other Senators, if they haven't spoken with victims of abuse, to speak to those who are; talk to the police chiefs; talk to the people who have to deal with this; talk to the people who have survived some of these horrendous attacks. Ask them if they think this is needed. Ask those who have been protected from further abuse because of the steps we have taken in the Violence Against Women Act—ask them if we need it.

The Presiding Officer and the other 98 Senators come in this building and we are protected by one of the finest police forces that exists, the Capitol Hill Police force. We don't have to worry; nobody is going to attack us. In the Presiding Officer's State and my State and all of the other States, unfortunately, thousands of people cannot rest easily that way. They know their attacker and often they know their attacker is waiting to do it again. We can easily stand up and say here in the Senate: No, we won't stand for this violence against women. Let's take the steps that we can take, the men and women in this body. Let's take the steps we can take to stop the violence.

EXHIBIT 1

APRIL 19, 2012.

Hon. HARRY REID

*Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.*

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,

*Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: As mayors who collectively represent over seven and a half million women, we believe it is imperative that the Senate pass S. 1925, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011. Despite considerable progress over the past two decades in addressing the epidemic of violence against women, we recognize that much more needs to be done and that this legislation will strengthen our national commitment to tackling the challenges that remain.

Since 1994, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has provided a comprehensive, coordinated, and community-based approach toward reducing domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other forms of violence. Over the past two decades, its programs and services have provided lifesaving assistance to hundreds of thousands of victims. Through victim support programs, local and state funding assistance, and the U Visa program, VAWA has strengthened the ability of the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute crimes and hold violent perpetrators accountable. These efforts have contributed to dramatic reductions in the incidence and impact of violence against women, including an over 50 percent decline in the annual rate of domestic violence. As we seek to make further progress, we believe it is essential that we provide services to victims regardless of their gender, race, language, immigration status, or sexual orientation.

As mayors, we have seen the tremendous positive impact of the Violence Against Women Act in our communities. In New York, VAWA funding has helped open three Family Justice Centers, which are one-stop domestic violence centers with staff from government agencies and nonprofit organizations to assist victims of domestic violence. In Los Angeles, VAWA funding has also helped expand its Domestic Abuse Response Team—a collaborative effort between law enforcement officers and victim advocates to respond to domestic violence calls at the scene of the crime and provide crisis intervention. The Chicago Police Department uses its funding to train staff to assist victims of domestic abuse in an effort to provide the best resources to these victims. These are just a few examples of the vital services and assistance that this landmark law has enabled communities all over the country to provide to combat this terrible problem.

Despite the progress that has been made, much more needs to be done. Still today, nearly one in five women have been sexually assaulted or raped in their lifetime, and 45 percent of the women killed in the United States die at the hands of an intimate partner. This level of violence is simply unacceptable. We believe that S. 1925—like the 2000 and 2005 reauthorizations that preceded it—will help us better address continuing problems and remaining unmet needs. This legislation will expand services to immigrant and lesbian, gay, and transgendered communities, who not only experience the highest rates of violence but often have the most difficulty in accessing services. In recognition of the persistent problem of sexual violence, S. 1925 also will strengthen the capacity of local, state, and federal law enforcement to investigate and prosecute these crimes. While these tools will be essential in

achieving justice, they are also a reminder of the wide impact that domestic violence has on the community at large including law enforcement. In each of our cities, police officers have been injured or murdered while responding to domestic violence incidents.

For these reasons, we believe that it is critical that the Senate move quickly to take up and pass S. 1925 in order to strengthen our national commitment to all victims of domestic violence.

Sincerely,

RAHM EMANUEL,  
Mayor, City of Chicago.

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA,  
Mayor, City of Los Angeles.

MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG,  
Mayor, City of New York.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL,  
Washington, DC, January 11, 2012.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, Since its passage in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") has shined a bright light on domestic violence, bringing the issue out of the shadows and into the forefront of our efforts to protect women and families. VAWA transformed the response to domestic violence at the local, state and federal level. Its successes have been dramatic, with the annual incidence of domestic violence falling by more than 50 percent.

Even though the advancements made since in 1994 have been significant, a tremendous amount of work remains and we believe it is critical that the Congress reauthorize VAWA. Every day in this country, abusive husbands or partners kill three women, and for every victim killed, there are nine more who narrowly escape that fate. We see this realized in our home states every day. Earlier this year in Delaware, three children—ages 12, 2½ and 1½—watched their mother be beaten to death by her ex-boyfriend on a sidewalk. In Maine last summer, an abusive husband subject to a protective order murdered his wife and two young children before taking his own life.

Reauthorizing VAWA will send a clear message that this country does not tolerate violence against women and show Congress' commitment to reducing domestic violence, protecting women from sexual assault and securing justice for victims.

VAWA reauthorization will continue critical support for victim services and target three key areas where data shows we must focus our efforts in order to have the greatest impact:

Domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual assault are most prevalent among young women aged 16–24, with studies showing that youth attitudes are still largely tolerant of violence, and that women abused in adolescence are more likely to be abused again as adults. VAWA reauthorization will help us break that cycle by consolidating and strengthening programs aimed at both prevention and intervention, with a particular emphasis on more effectively engaging men and local community-based resources in the process.

A woman who has been sexually assaulted can be subjected to further distress when the healthcare, law enforcement, and legal response to her attack is not coordinated and productive. Whether it is a first responder without adequate training, a rape kit that goes unprocessed for lack of funding, or a phone call between a crisis counselor and a prosecutor that never takes place, sexual assault victims deserve better. We must develop and implement best practices, training, and communication tools across dis-

ciplines in order to effectively prosecute and punish perpetrators, as well as help victims heal and rebuild their lives.

There is a growing consensus among practitioners and researchers that domestic violence homicides are predictable and, therefore, often preventable. We can save the lives of untold numbers of potential homicide victims with better training for advocates, law enforcement, and others who interact with victims to recognize the warning signs and react meaningfully.

The fight to protect women from violence is one that never ends. It is not a year-to-year issue, which is why we think it is critical that Congress reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. We know a great deal more about domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking than we did 17 years ago. Reauthorizing VAWA will allow us to build on those lessons and continue to make progress and save lives.

VAWA was last reauthorized in 2006 and time is of the essence for reauthorization of this important law. We urge Congress to take on this critical mission and reauthorize VAWA.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joseph R. "Beau" Biden III, Delaware Attorney General; Arthur Ripley Jr., American Samoa Attorney General; Dustin McDaniel, Arkansas Attorney General; John W. Suthers, Colorado Attorney General; Irvin Nathan, Washington DC Attorney General; William J. Schneider, Maine Attorney General; Tom Horne, Arizona Attorney General; Kamala Harris, California Attorney General; George Jepsen, Connecticut Attorney General; Pam Bondi, Florida Attorney General; Sam Olen, Georgia Attorney General; David Louie, Hawaii Attorney General; Lisa Madigan, Illinois Attorney General; Tom Miller, Iowa Attorney General; Jack Conway, Kentucky Attorney General.

Douglas F. Gansler, Maryland Attorney General; Bill Schuette, Michigan Attorney General; Jim Hood, Mississippi Attorney General; Steve Bullock, Montana Attorney General; Catherine Cortez Masto, Nevada Attorney General; Jeffrey Chiesa, New Jersey Attorney General; Lenny Rapadas, Guam Attorney General; Lawrence Wasden, Idaho Attorney General; Greg Zoeller, Indiana Attorney General; Derek Schmidt, Kansas Attorney General; James "Buddy" Caldwell, Louisiana Attorney General; Martha Coakley, Massachusetts Attorney General; Lori Swanson, Minnesota Attorney General; Chris Koster, Missouri Attorney General; Jon Bruning, Nebraska Attorney General; Michael Delaney, New Hampshire Attorney General; Gary King, New Mexico Attorney General.

Eric Schneiderman, New York Attorney General; Wayne Stenehjem, North Dakota Attorney General; Mike Dewine, Ohio Attorney General; John Kroger, Oregon Attorney General; Guillermo Somoza-Colombani, Puerto Rico Attorney General; Alan Wilson, South Carolina Attorney General; Robert E. Cooper, Jr., Tennessee Attorney General; Mark Shurtleff, Utah Attorney General; Vincent Frazer, Virgin Islands Attorney General; Darrell V. McGraw, Jr., West Virginia Attorney General; Greg Phillips, Wyoming Attorney General; Roy Cooper, North Carolina Attorney General; Edward T. Buckingham, Northern Mariana Islands Attorney General; Scott Pruitt, Oklahoma Attorney General; Linda L. Kelly, Pennsylvania Attorney General; Peter Kilmartin, Rhode Island Attorney General; Marty J. Jackley, South Dakota Attorney General; Greg Abbott, Texas Attorney General; William H. Sorrell, Vermont Attorney General; Rob McKenna, Washington Attorney General; J.B. Van Hollen, Wisconsin Attorney General.

## EXHIBIT 2

### STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

#### S. 1925—VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011

(Sen. Leahy, D-VT, and 60 cosponsors, Apr. 23, 2012)

The Administration strongly supports Senate passage of S. 1925 to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, a landmark piece of bipartisan legislation that first passed the Congress in 1994 and has twice been reauthorized. That Act transformed the Nation's response to violence against women and brought critically needed resources to States and local communities to address these crimes.

The Administration is pleased that S. 1925 continues that bipartisan progress and targets resources to address today's most pressing issues. Sexual assault remains one of the most underreported violent crimes in the country. The bill provides funding through State grants to improve the criminal justice response to sexual assault and to better connect victims with services. The bill also seeks to reduce domestic violence homicides and address the high rates of violence experienced by teens and young adults. Reaching young people through early intervention can break the cycle of violence.

The Administration strongly supports measures in S. 1925 that will bring justice to Native American victims. Rates of domestic violence against Native American women are now among the highest in the United States. The bill builds on the Tribal Law and Order Act—which President Obama signed on July 29, 2010—to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of tribal justice systems and will provide additional tools to tribal and Federal prosecutors to address domestic violence in Indian country. The Administration also supports the important leadership role of the Office on Violence Against Women and believes that all victims should have access to critically needed services and protections.

## TRIBUTE TO CHARLES COLSON

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to talk for a few minutes about Chuck Colson, who was a friend of mine and the founder of Prison Fellowship Ministries. He died on Saturday at 80.

Before Chuck Colson was 40, he was counselor to the President of the United States, Richard Nixon. At about that same time, about the time he was 40, he pled guilty to offenses related to the Daniel Ellsberg break-in. When he did that, I am told, even though his lawyers advised him not to plead guilty at that moment, he said pleading guilty was "the price I had to pay to complete the shedding of my old life to be free to live the new life." In June of 1974, he began to serve his prison sentence.

What was the new life? In August of 1973, Chuck Colson's good friend Tom Phillips had counseled with him, and that was the moment Chuck Colson said he decided his life would be led as a Christian, that he would surrender his life to the Christian view and the Christian belief. He personally told me at one time that it was T.S. Eliot's writing "Mere Christianity" that then later became the intellectual basis for his faith. But initially his faith was needed more than he clearly understood he had, and he found that in his faith. It was an active faith.