

Mr. CRAPO. I have concluded my remarks. I yield my time.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 47, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to (S. 47) a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the senior Senator from Idaho for his comments. He has been not only a stalwart supporter, he actually has been essential in the drafting of this legislation. We all share this concern of finding ways to stop violence against women. I realize different parts of the country have different problems, different stresses. I am pleased to have a western view to go with this eastern view. But also, I think, it is a case of the best legislation in this body, legislation supported by both Democrats and Republicans. When we come together as Senators, things get done.

That is one of the reasons we are turning to this bill, S. 47, the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, as one of our first bills. It has bipartisan support. I thank Majority Leader REID for making this unfinished business a priority for the Senate.

Congressional enactment of our strong bipartisan bill to help all victims of domestic and sexual violence is long overdue. Our bill has more than 60 bipartisan Senate cosponsors. I think this week we can finally finish what we started last year by passing the bill in the Senate, sending it to the other body, and having them take it up. I know I am deeply indebted—we all are—to the women and men around the country who have been working with us. They have been steadfast in their commitment to the victims and to our efforts to combat domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault.

There is a pressing need to update the Violence Against Women Act. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found that one in four women has been the victim of severe physical domestic violence. One in five women has been

raped in her lifetime. More than half of the homicides in my State of Vermont are related to domestic violence.

Let me emphasize that just a bit. Vermont has one of the lowest crime rates in the country. But when I look at the source of the crime, more than half of the homicides are related to domestic violence. Those percentages are very high in almost every State. That is simply unacceptable. While the Judiciary Committee has been preparing to consider legislation on the subject of gun violence at the end of this month, we can act now, without delay, in the Senate to strengthen the protections of the Violence Against Women Act.

All of the provisions in our bill passed the Senate last year. In fact, 9 months ago the Senate passed the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act with 68 votes. The Senate often has a hard time coming together with 51 votes, but here we had 68 votes from Members of both parties, across the political spectrum.

Last December we worked out with Senator CORNYN and Senator GRASSLEY additional provisions to amend the Debbie Smith Act, which we passed, to reduce the backlog of untested rape kits in order to provide for additional audits and reporting, and increase the capacity of State and local law enforcement to perform DNA analysis. Those provisions are now incorporated into this VAWA bill.

I hope those few Senators who opposed the bill last year will now join with us to enact VAWA reauthorization. I think we should act quickly and decisively to pass this bill, and send it to the House. I know if it reaches the President's desk, from what he has told me, he will sign it without delay.

Our bill will support the use of techniques proven to identify high-risk cases and prevent domestic violence homicides. It is going to increase VAWA'S focus on sexual assault and push colleges to strengthen their efforts to protect students from domestic and sexual violence. It will allow us to make real progress in addressing the horrifying epidemic of domestic violence in tribal communities. A recent study found almost three in five native women had been assaulted by their spouses or intimate partners.

Our bill will allow services to get to those in the LGBT community who have had trouble accessing services in the past. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a few weeks ago that found the rates of domestic and sexual violence in these communities are equal to or greater than those of the general population. We also have key improvements for immigrant victims of domestic and sexual violence.

I did note when we reintroduced this bill at the outset of this year that we will be pressing the increase of U Visas for those victims who assist law enforcement in the context of comprehensive immigration reform. Last year, the House of Representatives re-

fused to consider the Senate-passed bill because the U Visa provision, while fully offset, was seen technically to affect revenues. We removed it from the bill this year. I don't want this bill to be slowed up because of a technical excuse.

When somebody is being abused, they don't need to hear about technicalities. They want us to stop it, and they want us to expedite action on this bill. I remain strongly committed to the U Visa increase. As I said, I will try to include it in the immigration legislation we will be considering in the next couple of months. The reason I will do that, of course, is it will benefit law enforcement and victims, and we should enact it.

I have said so many times on the floor of the Senate that I remember my days as a prosecutor in Vermont—let me state it this way: I remember going to crime scenes at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. I remember seeing people being taken out in an ambulance, barely alive, battered to within an inch of their life. But I especially remember those who did not even get that far, lying on the floor, up against a wall, waiting for the medical examiner to come and pronounce the person dead and allow the police to collect evidence and move them.

During that time no police officer ever said: Is this victim gay or straight? Is this victim an immigrant or Native American? They said, as I have said so many times on the floor: A victim is a victim is a victim. How do we stop this from happening to somebody else? How do we catch the person who did this?

Law enforcement wants tools for after the fact. But even more, they want what we have in here: something to stop the abuse from happening in the first place. Every day we do not pass legislation to prevent this violence and assist victims, people are suffering.

I hope all Senators—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—will join us. I have spoken of Senator CRAPO'S long-standing commitment to victims. But, also, I have spoken often of the support of Senators MIKULSKI and MURKOWSKI and MURRAY and KLOBUCHAR and COONS and COLLINS and SHAHEEN and FRANKEN and HAGAN and CASEY and so many others who have joined to help to shape this legislation and work to pass it. I also appreciate the support and assistance of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women and its many member organizations whose insight has been so critical.

I thank the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. I am so proud of them. They have done great work helping victims in Vermont with support from the VAWA programs. They have been a leader in developing and supporting this legislation.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my statement a letter organized

by the National Task Force and signed by more than 1,300 local, tribal, and national organizations supporting this important bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.
(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. LEAHY. Since we first passed the Violence Against Women Act nearly two decades ago, States have strengthened criminal rape statutes, and every State has made stalking a crime. The annual incidence of domestic violence has dropped more than 50 percent. We have something here that has been a success. We have helped to provide victims with critical services, such as housing and legal protection.

We have to remember, these are not just statistics. These are thousands of lives made immeasurably better. I might say because of this work these thousands of lives are still lives; they are not statistics of people murdered. All the provisions in our bill were developed with the help of victims and those who assist them every day. They are commonsense measures. They will help real people. Every prosecutor, every support group—all will tell you it is past time for Congress to enact this bill to provide help for victims of domestic violence and rape.

We can make these concrete, important changes in the law. We can do it this week. I have been involved in this for years, and I have seen the results of what we have done. I have seen the lives that have been made immeasurably better because of what we have done. I have seen the lives that have been saved because of what we have done. There is no excuse to delay further.

EXHIBIT 1

NATIONAL TASK FORCE TO END SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN,

February 4, 2013.

Senator,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: We, the undersigned local, tribal, and national organizations, represent and support millions of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking throughout the United States, American Indian Tribes and territories. On behalf of the victims we represent, the professionals who serve them and the communities that sustain them, we ask that you support the Violence Against Women Act's (VAWA) reauthorization by co-sponsoring and voting for S. 47. As you know, VAWA is slated to come to the Senate floor as early as next week and we are asking you to take a leadership role in ensuring that this landmark bi-partisan bill will continue its important work.

VAWA's programs support state, tribal and local efforts to address the pervasive and insidious crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. These programs have made great progress towards reducing the violence, helping victims to be healthy and feel safe and holding perpetrators accountable. This critical legislation must be reauthorized to ensure a continued response to these crimes.

Since its original passage in 1994, VAWA has dramatically enhanced our nation's response to violence against girls and women, boys and men. More victims report domestic violence to the police and the rate of non-

fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 64%. The sexual assault services program in VAWA helps rape crisis centers keep their doors open to provide the frontline response to victims of rape. VAWA provides for a coordinated community approach, improving collaboration between law enforcement and victim services providers to better meet the needs of victims. These comprehensive and cost-effective programs not only save lives, they also save money. In fact, VAWA saved nearly \$12.6 billion in net averted social costs in just its first six years.

VAWA has unquestionably improved the national response to these terrible crimes. Nonetheless, much work remains to be done to address unmet needs and enhance access to protections and services for all victims. We urge you to sponsor and vote for S. 47 in order to build upon VAWA's successes and continue to enhance our nation's ability to promote an end to this violence, to hold perpetrators accountable and to keep victims and their families safe from future harm. Thank you.

Sincerely,

* * *

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues, as I will do, to support the motion to proceed to the Violence Against Women Act. I expect that many of my Republican colleagues will also vote to proceed to the bill.

There has long been bipartisan support for the Violence Against Women Act. Too many women are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. Federal support for services to these women, and sometimes even men, has been beneficial to our country.

There is overwhelming bipartisan support for 98 percent of what is contained in S. 47, so I favor proceeding to the bill and offering limited amendments. We can then have a Senate vote, allow the other body to work its will, resolve any differences between the bills, pass a compromised reauthorization bill through both Houses, and get it to the President.

The process on the Violence Against Women Act in the last Congress was very disappointing. Previously the Violence Against Women Act was reauthorized unanimously. Something similar could have happened again last year, but it didn't. New provisions were brought forth into the bill. Some of the provisions were very controversial. Some provisions even raised serious constitutional concerns, but those on the other side insisted on these provisions without any change and refused to compromise. It appeared that the debate was more about blame and politics than it was about providing help to women in need.

In the last Congress, both the Republican leader and this Senator offered that the Senate consent to striking a provision which violated the Constitution's origination clause, and then proceed to conference. The majority spurned those efforts on both occasions. Yet today S. 47 has removed the very provision which raised the blue-slip problem with the House of Representatives because, as we all know, under the Constitution all bills raising

revenue must start in the House of Representatives. The majority did this only a few months after the majority refused to drop that very same provision and proceed to conference. So this bill could have been to the President last year. The willingness of the majority today to eliminate that very unconstitutional provision demonstrates that we could have had a bill to the President last year. That ought to be a terrible disappointment not only to this Senator but to all the people in the Senate.

It is not true that unless S. 47 is passed exactly as is various groups will be excluded from protections under the law. Would anyone care to know why? Because the current law protects all victims.

Vice President BIDEN wrote the current law. Every Member of the Senate who was a Member of this body when the Violence Against Women Act was last reauthorized voted for that bill. Neither Vice President BIDEN nor any other Senator passed a discriminatory bill then. It is not the case that unless the controversial provisions are accepted exactly as the majority insists without any compromise whatsoever that any groups will be excluded.

The key stumbling block to enacting a bill at this time is the provision concerning Indian tribal courts. That provision raises serious constitutional questions concerning both the sovereignty of tribal courts and the constitutional rights of defendants who would be tried in those courts. We should focus on providing needed services to Native American women. S. 47 makes political statements and expounds on Native American sovereignty. It raises such significant constitutional problems that its passage might actually not accomplish anything at all for Native American women while failing to protect the constitutional rights of other American citizens.

Even the Congressional Research Service has raised constitutional questions with the tribal provisions in this very bill. Negotiations are continuing, and I am quite confident that if we can reach an agreement on these questions, compromises on the other few remaining issues can also be secured and would allow the bill to pass with overwhelming bipartisan support. If we are unable to reach agreement in the next couple of days, then I intend to offer a substitute that is much more likely to be accepted by the House and become law.

In the meantime, for this very day, all we are talking about is getting to this bill so we can discuss these issues. I will vote for the motion to proceed, and I ask my colleagues to do so as well.

I yield the floor, and 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. LEAHY. 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. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second. There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

DEMOCRATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) is necessarily absent.

REPUBLICAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 12 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Fischer	Menendez
Ayotte	Flake	Merkley
Baldwin	Franken	Mikulski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baucus	Graham	Murphy
Bennet	Grassley	Murray
Blumenthal	Hagan	Nelson
Blunt	Harkin	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Pryor
Boxer	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Reid
Burr	Heller	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Hirono	Sanders
Cardin	Hoeven	Schatz
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Johnson (SD)	Shaheen
Chambliss	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Coats	Kaine	Stabenow
Coburn	King	Tester
Cochran	Kirk	Thune
Collins	Klobuchar	Udall (CO)
Coons	Landrieu	Udall (NM)
Corker	Lautenberg	Warner
Cornyn	Leahy	Warren
Crapo	Levin	Whitehouse
Donnelly	Manchin	Wicker
Durbin	McCain	Wyden
Enzi	McCasikill	
Feinstein	McConnell	

NAYS—8

Cruz	Paul	Rubio
Johanns	Risch	Scott
Lee	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—6

Begich	Moran	Toomey
Isakson	Sessions	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 47) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

CONGRATULATING NEW ORLEANS

Ms. LANDRIEU. I know Senator HARKIN is on the floor with others to present several new pieces of legislation or to speak on items pending. I wanted to take a moment of personal privilege to say just a few words about the spectacular sporting event that took place in our country yesterday in the city of New Orleans. I want to, of course, congratulate the Baltimore Ravens, the Senators from Maryland, particularly Senator MIKULSKI and Senator CARDIN, and Governor O'Malley, who was there, of course, representing Maryland; the Senators from San Francisco and California, the 49ers, Senators FEINSTEIN and BOXER, former Speaker PELOSI was with us yesterday in New Orleans, and thousands of fans from all over the world and, of course, watching on television.

I wanted to make a note on this floor, not because it was just a sporting event, although it was one of the highest watched Super Bowls ever in the history of the game, but because of the role this Congress played and the administration in helping this great city and region and State rebound from what was a devastating body blow 7½ years ago with Hurricane Katrina and then Rita hit 3 weeks later and then the levees broke in over 52 places. The city went virtually underwater—at least two-thirds of the city.

To see, 7½ years later, the city rebound, the people of New Orleans and Louisiana are just foremost in my thoughts right now for their fighting spirit, their resiliency, their unwillingness to give up on this special place that will celebrate its 300th birthday in 2018. I want to say a special thank-you to Mayor Landrieu, John Young, president of Jefferson Parish, the leaders of St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parish. Those parishes were virtually destroyed, the lower part of Jefferson Parish. The whole region has come back. The world could see it for themselves yesterday—the civic leadership, the faith-based leadership. Again, a shout out to President Obama, his Cabinet and the Members on both sides of

the aisle who stood by this region, the gulf coast, to rebuild after all these years.

In conclusion, it is my only hope that after passing the Sandy supplemental, we will stand united with the Northeast as they rebuild bigger, better, stronger, hosting the next Super Bowl which is a real symbol of resurgence and rebuilding and resurrection.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF FMLA

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, this week is a milestone for working families across America. Twenty years ago this week, President Bill Clinton signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act. There are many laws we pass in Washington that most Americans never have reason to know or care about. The FMLA, by contrast, has changed this country in profoundly important ways.

It has touched the lives of millions of working families. It is almost hard to imagine today, but 20 years ago before this landmark law, workers had to risk their jobs and livelihoods when family needs arose. There was no national policy for maternity leave or paternity leave. New mothers were sometimes compelled to return to work just days after giving birth or to quit jobs they would otherwise have liked to keep.

There was no law allowing someone to take leave from work to care for an aging, potentially dying parent or to care for a child with a serious illness. Families had to leave their loved ones in the hands of others or quit their jobs and face dire economic consequences. There was no policy to allow a seriously ill worker to return to work after recovering from cancer or other serious health condition. All these workers risked being fired, having no job to return to, and losing their health insurance as well.

Countless hard-working Americans were forced to make wrenching choices between their or their family's health and their economic well-being.

The passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act changed all that. It has helped new parents bond with their children during those first magical few weeks of life. It has helped to give workers struggling with a difficult diagnosis the time and security they need to recover. It has allowed loving family members to care for relatives with disabilities and elderly parents.

It has ensured that family members of our wounded warriors can be there to help their heroes recover. Just as important, it has helped countless businesses across the country retain good workers and maintain an experienced and dedicated workforce.

The FMLA has been an unqualified success. It has made a real difference in the lives of millions of hard-working Americans. In fact, the FMLA has been