

August 7, 2023

National Sign on Letter of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Trafficking Organizations and Programs in Support of Full and Equal Access to Services and Shelter for Transgender Survivors

We, the undersigned 189 sexual assault, domestic violence, and trafficking organizations, strongly oppose proposed legislation and laws that limit the rights of transgender individuals. With missions to end domestic violence and sexual assault, we condemn the rhetoric that any such laws will increase safety or exist to protect women. Anti-trans laws do not increase safety and such proposals are opposed by the movement to end gender-based violence.

Though we oppose all legislation that targets the transgender community, we specifically oppose anti-transgender legislation that seeks to bar transgender and nonbinary survivors from support services and shelter spaces. States across the country have introduced harmful legislation that seeks to erode non-discrimination protections and prohibit transgender and nonbinary survivors from accessing public spaces that align with their gender identity, including restrooms, locker rooms, prison facilities, and more. These proposals seek to prohibit transgender and nonbinary people from accessing domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers, thereby eliminating their ability to seek safe shelter space to escape an abusive relationship or healing services to recover from an experience of sexual violence.

These types of legislation are in violation of federal non-discrimination provisions in the Violence Against Women Act and Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, two primary sources of federal funding that domestic violence and sexual assault service providers rely on to provide services. Anti-trans legislation burdens service providers, forcing them to navigate contradictory laws that threaten access to federal funding.

Groups supporting anti-trans proposals claim that the proposed legislation is necessary for public safety and to prevent sexual violence against women and children. As sexual assault service providers, domestic violence shelters, and other service providers who work each and every day to meet the needs of all survivors and reduce sexual assault and domestic violence throughout society, we speak from experience and expertise when we state that these claims are false. As organizations whose missions are to reduce abuse and violence, we support laws and policies that protect transgender people from discrimination, including in accessing facilities that match the gender they live every day. We call on legislators to focus on survivors' real needs - housing, advocacy, legal support, counseling, children's services, and more.

Transgender and nonbinary individuals are already at higher risk of domestic violence and sexual assault due to the discrimination, stigma, and barriers to financial and housing security that the transgender community experiences, with transgender women of color disproportionately impacted. Transgender people already experience unconscionably high rates

August 7, 2023

of sexual assault—and forcing them out of facilities consistent with their gender makes them vulnerable to assault and abuse. Transgender people are also three times more likely to experience homelessness than their cisgender lesbian, gay, and bisexual counterparts, and eight times more likely than cisgender straight people—which speaks to the enormous need for shelters to be welcoming and affirming to transgender survivors. Limiting shelter access for transgender individuals would exacerbate this problem. Placing further legal restrictions on LGBTQ people’s access to safe shelter and supportive resources would make it even harder for LGBTQ survivors to exit abusive relationships safely and seek support in the aftermath of domestic and sexual violence.

As advocates committed to ending sexual assault and domestic violence of every kind, we will never support any law or policy that could put anyone at greater risk for assault or abuse. That is why we strongly support transgender-inclusive non-discrimination protections and oppose any law that would jeopardize the safety of transgender people by forcing them into shelters, facilities, and restrooms that do not align with their gender or excluding them from shelters based on their gender identity.

Discriminating against transgender people does not give anyone more control over their body or safety. Those who perpetuate falsehoods about transgender people and non-discrimination laws are putting transgender people in harm’s way and making no one safer. We cannot stand by while survivors, both those who are transgender and those who are not, are endangered by these laws. We will only accomplish our goal of ending sexual assault and domestic violence by treating all people, including those who are transgender, with fairness and respect.

Respectfully submitted,

A Safe Place

A Window Between Worlds

Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services (ADWAS)

Advocates of Ozaukee

Alexandra House, Inc.

Alternative Horizons

Alternatives to Violence

Arise Lawrence County

Arise Sexual Assault Services

Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

August 7, 2023

Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Battered Women's Shelter and Rape Crisis Center of Medina and Summit Counties
BeLEAF Survivors
Blackburn Center
Bolton Refuge House, Inc.
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)
Boston Medical Center Domestic Violence Program
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
CASA
Casa Myrna Vazquez
Catalyst Domestic Violence Services
Center for Abused Persons
Center of Hope
Centre Safe
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
Clinton County Women's Center dba Roads to Peace
Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence
Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Community Action Partnership of Lancaster County
Community Against Violence, Inc.
Congreso De Latinos Unidos
Crisis Center North
Crisis Support Network
CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Community United Against Violence
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Domestic Violence Escape (DOVE), Inc.
Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania
Dove Center
DOVE Inc.
Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center
Embrace Services, Inc.
Empower Yolo

August 7, 2023

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
Esperanza United
Family Advocates
Family and Community Resources, Inc.
Family Violence Appellate Project
Family Violence Law Center - California
FORGE, Inc.
Friends, Inc.
Futures Without Violence
GA Coalition Against Domestic Violence
GreenHouse17
Hands of Hope Resource Center
HarborCOV
Haven Hills, Inc.
Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Health Imperatives, Inc.
Healthy Alternatives to Violent Environments
Heartly House, Inc.
HELP of Door County
Helpmate
Humboldt Domestic Violence Services
Huntingdon House
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Illinois Accountability Initiative
Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence
INPACT Boston
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Jane Doe Inc.
Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center
Jewish Family & Children's Service Journey to Safety
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Jewish Family Services, Inc.
Just Solutions

August 7, 2023

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
Kiran Inc.
Latinx In Action
Laurel House
Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund
Life Crisis Center, Inc.
Lutheran Settlement House
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
Missions Inc. Programs
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Montgomery County DHHS - Trauma Services
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National LGBTQ+ Women's Community Survey
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence
New England Learning Center for Women in Transition
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
New Beginnings APFV, Inc
New Hope Inc
New Horizons Crisis Center
New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence
New Mexico Asian Family Center
New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs
New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
New Mexico Women
Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence

August 7, 2023

North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
PCADV
Pearl Crisis Center
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center
Reach Counseling Services
Relationship Safety Alliance
Resolve
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Ruth's House
Saahas for Cause
Safe Haven of Pender, Inc.
Safe Haven Shelter and Resource Center
Safe Journey
Safe Passage, Massachusetts
Safe Space, Inc.
Safelight Inc.
SafeSpace Anti-Violence Program at Pride Center of Vermont
Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments Inc. (SAVE)
Schuylkill Hope Center for Victims of Domestic Violence
Second Bloom of Chatham, Inc.
Sexual Assault Center
Sexual Assault Services of Northwest New Mexico
Sheedy Consulting LLC
Sierra Community House
Solace Sexual Assault Services
South Shore Resource and Advocacy Center
Spanish American Center, Inc.

Standpoint
Stepping Stones, Inc.
Survivor Advocacy Outreach Program

August 7, 2023

Tahirih Justice Center
Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Bridge to Hope
The Center for Women & Community
The Center for Women and Families, Inc.
The Cocoon
The Key Program, Inc. Children's Charter Division
The Network/La Red
The People Concern
The Resource Connection
The Women's Center
The Women's Center, Inc. of Columbia/Montour
The Women's Community, Inc.
Transition House
Tubman
Turning Point of Lehigh Valley, Inc.
UNIDOS
Upper Ohio Valley Sexual Assault Help Center, Inc.
Utah Domestic Violence Coalition
VALOR
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Victim Outreach Intervention Center (VOICe)
Violence Free Colorado
Violence Free Minnesota
Violence Prevention Center
Violence Recovery Program, Fenway Health
Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Women Against Abuse
Women and Children's Horizons
Women Helping Women
Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

August 7, 2023

Women's Resources of Monroe County, Inc.

Womens' Shelter and Support Center

Women's Shelter of Long Beach

West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

YWCA Central MA

YWCA Northeastern Massachusetts

YWCA of San Gabriel Valley

YWCA West Central Michigan

YWCA York

ZeroV