



COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS GLOBALLY

Pass the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA)

One out of every three women worldwide will be physically, sexually or otherwise abused during her lifetime—with rates reaching 70 percent in some countries. This type of violence ranges from rape to domestic violence and child marriage to so-called “honor killings.” Violence against women and girls is a human rights violation, a public health epidemic, and a barrier to solving global challenges such as extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS and conflict. Violence against women and girls also has an economic cost to both household incomes and broader economic development around the world. Gender-based violence (GBV) occurs in peacetime and in conflict and knows no national or cultural barriers.

The bipartisan **International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 3571/S.2307)**, also known as **IVAWA**, makes ending violence against women and girls a top diplomatic and foreign assistance priority by codifying, implementing and giving congressional oversight to the ongoing *U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally*. It also permanently authorizes the State Department’s Office of Global Women’s Issues with the position of Ambassador-at-Large, who coordinates policies, programs, and funding relating to gender integration and women’s empowerment internationally, including those intended to prevent and respond to GBV. **These entities exist within the current agency structure, having first been established in the early 2000’s.**

IVAWA will streamline and better coordinate anti-GBV programming across various U.S. government agencies, making addressing GBV a cornerstone of U.S. development and foreign policy. **Since this legislation is aimed at coordinating and integrating existing programs, it does not require the appropriation of additional funding.** More specifically, the IVAWA would do the following:

Change Social Norms to Prevent Gender-based Violence.

IVAWA focuses on preventing violence by transforming social norms about the acceptability of it. IVAWA recognizes that while women and girls disproportionately suffer from violence, men and boys experience targeted violence too. The bill intentionally utilizes the term GBV throughout, making it inclusive of all persons and not precluding programs from supporting men and boys. IVAWA will support public awareness programs to change attitudes that condone, and at times encourage, violence against women and girls, as well as men and boys, and will emphasize community-based solutions.

Increase Legal and Judicial Protection to Address Gender-based Violence.

IVAWA focuses on establishing and supporting laws and legal structures that help prevent and appropriately respond to all forms of GBV. Emphasis is placed on promoting political, legal, and institutional reforms that recognize such violence as a crime and train police and the judiciary to hold violators accountable and to respond to the needs of survivors.

Increase Health Sector Capacity to Address Gender-based Violence.

IVAWA will integrate programs to address gender-based violence into already existing health programs focused on child survival, health, and HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment. It takes a holistic “systems” approach and emphasizes enhancing the capacity of the health sector to assess the impact of violence on one’s health and help protect individuals from violence.

Increase Women’s Economic Opportunity and Education.

IVAWA focuses on reducing women and girls’ vulnerability to violence by improving their economic status and educational opportunities. Emphasis is placed on ensuring women’s access to job training and employment opportunities and increasing their right to own land and property. The legislation also addresses the rights of women and girls to work and go to school free of sexual coercion and assault.

To cosponsor this legislation, please contact Andrew.Goczowski@mail.house.gov, in Rep. Schakowsky’s Office, Nick.Czajka@mail.house.gov, in Rep. Gibson’s Office, Ariana.Reks@boxer.senate.gov, in Senator Boxer’s Office, or Jill.Carney@collins.senate.gov, in Senator Collins’ Office.

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