



February 9, 2022  
Statement of Esta Soler,  
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## **Country Needs U.S. Senate to Quickly Pass Violence Against Women Act, Introduced Today**

“Our country will be safer and families and communities stronger when the U.S. Senate passes the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA 2022), introduced by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) today. This bill makes a welcome and urgently needed investment in prevention and healing at this time when we have never needed it more, as the pandemic continues creating stress and trauma across our country.

VAWA 2022 is landmark legislation that builds on our knowledge about how to prevent violence by investing in programs that engage children and youth, men and boys, and those on college campuses. It includes Bree’s Law, legislation named in honor of Bree Moore, aimed at preventing teen dating violence. It strengthens health programs so they better address the intersection of gender-based violence and mental and behavioral health. It expands the rights of Tribes to prosecute people who sexually assault or abuse Native Women and children, which happens with horrifying frequency. It increases funding for the Rape Prevention and Education Program and for culturally specific violence prevention programs, expands the work to prevent sexual violence and harassment online, and in other ways holds promise to stop violence against women and children and make our communities safer.

This is legislation the country needs. The reauthorization of VAWA is long, long overdue. The U.S. House of Representatives reauthorized this essential, life-saving legislation last March and it is only now being introduced in the U.S. Senate. With COVID-19 confining so many people to their homes and reshaping the ways we can protect and support those at risk for violence, passage of this bill should be an urgent priority. The Senate must pass VAWA 2022 so President Biden can sign it into law. There is no time to waste.”

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### **ABOUT FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE:**

For more than 35 years, FUTURES has been providing groundbreaking programs, policies and campaigns that empower individuals and organizations working to end violence against women and children around the world. Striving to reach new audiences and transform social norms, FUTURES trains professionals such as doctors, nurses, judges and athletic coaches on improving responses to violence and abuse. FUTURES also works with advocates, policymakers and others to build sustainable community leadership and educate people everywhere about the importance of respect and healthy relationships.