

Legislative Summary



Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act (FVPSA)

October 2022

OVERVIEW

FVPSA is the only federal funding source under the Department of Health and Human Services dedicated to providing domestic violence prevention services. FVPSA will reauthorize and expand funding for programs focused on protecting survivors and preventing family and domestic violence. Among the provisions for survivors, this bill includes authorizations for emergency housing, counseling, and assistance for those in financial distress. FVPSA was first authorized in 1984 and has provided essential services for survivors and their children.

FVPSA EXPANDS RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS AND INITIATIVES TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY:

- **Increasing the funding authorization level to \$252 million** to respond to low funding levels and provide access to FVPSA funds for programs not currently funded.
- **Expanding support and access for culturally-specific programs.**
 - Culturally-specific organizations are better equipped to address the complex, multi-layered challenges facing victims from racial and ethnic minority populations as they seek services and protections from abuse.
 - Culturally-specific programs often have challenges accessing FVPSA funding at the state and local levels due to the limited funding available and robust competition. This bill authorizes a new culturally-specific program to address these needs and incorporates related funding into the formula itself.
- **Strengthening the capacity of Indian Tribes to exercise their sovereign authority** to more fully respond to domestic violence in their communities and authorizes funding for tribal coalitions and the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.
- **Meaningfully investing in prevention.** Brings evidence-informed, community-based prevention initiatives to more communities.
- **Strengthening and updating the National Domestic Violence Hotline and hotline services for underrepresented populations,** including American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Deaf victims of domestic and dating violence.



Violence is preventable; to prevent domestic violence and child abuse we must take a holistic approach and FVPSA is an excellent federal program, we know it works.

Dr. Elizabeth Miller



REAUTHORIZATION WOULD:

- **Create a new underserved populations grant program.**
 - The lack of resources and severity of violence is often heightened for survivors living at the margins, such as those living in rural communities, individuals with disabilities, older adults, those identifying with faith-based communities, youth and others. These underserved populations are often reluctant to seek assistance, and when they do, they frequently look for services and support in their immediate communities. This bill creates a grant program for family centers, youth centers, senior centers, community-based organizations or vocational organizations to meet the needs of these survivors.
- **Continue to support national technical assistance (TA) centers**, including the Alaskan Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence, and their work to develop effective policy, practice, research and cross-system collaborations.
- **Update provisions and definitions to ensure access to services for all survivors**, better align with related programs and reflect evolving practices in order to provide uniform guidance to those working to end domestic violence.
 - Updates language to reflect current practices and provide a reference to other statutes to ensure common understanding across different federal programs.