(Title - Senator/Representative) Name

Address1

City, DC ZIP

Date

Dear REPRESENTATIVE/SENATOR LAST NAME,

I am writing in support of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), including its standards of practices and the federal funds needed to keep our communities safe. VAWA is essential to prevent sexual assault in Louisiana, support survivors, and hold perpetrators accountable.

PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THE ISSUE, IF YOU WANT TO SHARE.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that 280,000 women in Louisiana are raped over the course of their lifetimes. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children experience sexual violence at the hands of partners, friends, authority figures, family members, and strangers.[[1]](#footnote-1) Each rape in the United States costs an estimated $122,461 in short- and long-term physical and mental health care, lost work productivity, criminal justice proceedings, and property loss/damage, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Investing in quality prevention and survivor services can reduce these costs to survivors, their employers and educational institutions, and local, state, and federal government agencies.

Services that local centers provide include a 24-hour hotline, accompaniment for forensic examinations and legal proceedings, information about criminal and civil justice options, counseling, prevention education, and community outreach. The Violence Against Women Act also provides an accountability mechanism that ensures local and state agencies operate using best practices for evidence collection, investigation, and prosecution.

Louisiana is in the midst of a deep budget crisis, and VAWA ensures that sexual violence prevention, victim services, and public safety are not caught in the crosshairs. State agencies and designated organizations are able to allocate these life-saving resources to sexual assault crisis centers, law enforcement agencies, district attorney’s offices, culturally-specific organizations, and other groups. The Violence Against Women Act saves lives in Louisiana. I encourage you to preserve it.

Sincerely,

NAME

ADDRESS

1. National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/state\_tables.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)