

April 12, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

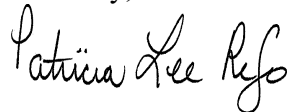
On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), which is the largest voluntary association of lawyers and legal professionals in the world, I write to urge you to swiftly consider legislation just passed by the House to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. H.R. 1620, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021, would help to ensure that victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking have access to healing and justice by funding critical services in every state.

The ABA supports this legislation as it will improve services, minimize bias, and prioritize safety, autonomy, and support for all victims of gender-based violence. H.R. 1620 strengthens the healthcare system's comprehensive and trauma-informed response to gender-based violence, provides economic and housing opportunities and protections for victims, and implements evidence-based prevention and educational programs that encourage healthy relationships.

We particularly applaud this bill's increased funding to expand the number of public interest civil litigators to serve victims' legal needs and enhance judicial, legal, and law enforcement tools available to respond to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in a trauma-informed way, including allowing for innovation in developing victim-defined alternatives to traditional justice system responses. We also support the key provisions recognizing tribal courts' inherent jurisdiction over gender-based and related violence committed on tribal lands, allowing tribes to prosecute non-Native offenders for domestic and sexual violence committed in Indian country.

The ABA appreciates your consideration of these views, and we urge your colleagues in the Senate to join this much-needed bipartisan effort to ensure that funding and resources for survivors continue to be available, especially in this challenging time when demand for services has skyrocketed. We stand ready to help move this legislation forward. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact ABA Legislative Counsel David Eppstein at 202-662-1766 or david.eppstein@americanbar.org.

Sincerely,



Patricia Lee Refo