



## National Task Force to End Sexual & Domestic Violence

### **H.R.1585 is not a partisan bill**

**Myth:** Opponents of H.R.1585 inaccurately claim it is a partisan goody bag.

**Fact:** We have worked on a bipartisan basis for two-and-a-half years to develop a strong yet modest reauthorization that meets the needs of victims and survivors.

### **A straight reauthorization is not acceptable/we do not need more time**

**Myth:** People who oppose H.R.1585 claim that we need a short-term extension of the current law to provide more time to work on reauthorizing it.

**Fact:** We have been working with Congress on VAWA reauthorization for two-and-a-half years. We do not need more time, and we cannot afford to maintain the status quo. Thousands of people experience sexual and domestic violence daily - they cannot wait!

### **Funding for the Violence Against Women Act**

**Myth:** Opponents of H.R.1585 falsely claim that VAWA is not currently being funded.

**Fact:** VAWA is funded at record levels for the remainder of the fiscal year (until midnight September 30) We fully expect it to be funded for the upcoming fiscal year, too.

**Myth:** Opponents complain that new provisions will curtail or dilute VAWA's resources.

**Fact:** H.R. 1585 responds to survivors' desire to secure accountability and services outside the criminal justice system. Congress has recognized the need to fund a comprehensive response to domestic and sexual violence, and we believe that will continue.

### **Closing the boyfriend and stalking loopholes**

H.R.1585 prohibits people *convicted* of misdemeanor dating violence or stalking, people subject to dating violence protective orders, and people subject to temporary protective orders from having guns.

**Myth:** The NRA falsely claims H.R.1585 is an unprecedented expansion of gun laws. They claim misdemeanor convictions have never prohibited someone from having a gun.

**Fact:** *For a quarter century, federal law has prohibited people convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence from having guns.* H.R.1585 just updates the law to include dating abusers and stalkers.

**Myth:** The gun lobby falsely claims that H.R.1585 dating violence and stalking are "vague" terms. They further claim someone could lose their gun access after going on one bad date or for sending too many text messages.

**Fact:** H.R.1585 clearly defines dating violence and stalking. Plus, for dating misdemeanors, the *perpetrator has to use physical force or threaten the victim with a deadly weapon.* Annoying text messages do not count.

**Myth:** Opponents of H.R. 1585 falsely claim it violates the due process rights of the person who is losing their gun access.

**Fact:** *Robust due process protections are built into both H.R. 1585 and current law*, and courts are involved every step of the way. The phrases ‘due process,’ ‘notice,’ and ‘opportunity to be heard,’ actually appears in the bill language (Title VIII, paragraph (2)(A))!

**Myth:** Confused people believe H.R. 1585 contains “red flag laws.”

**Fact:** “Red flag laws” (extreme risk protection orders - ERPOs) are different from laws to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and stalkers. ERPOs cover people experiencing crises that make it temporarily inadvisable for them to have firearms, not adjudicated abusers and stalkers.

### **Preserving existing nondiscrimination protections for all survivors**

VAWA-funded programs serve *all* survivors of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, regardless of gender or gender identity.

**Myth:** There is a common misunderstanding that the Violence Against Women Act only funds services and programs for “women” and is not intended to serve all survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking.

**Fact:** VAWA has always been gender neutral. Since 2013, VAWA has explicitly protected all survivors’ ability to find the support they need by prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. While women, including transgender women, are disproportionately impacted by this violence, people of all gender identities experience violence and deserve access to life-saving services.

**Myth:** Anti-transgender activists are attempting to use fear by saying that transgender people make other survivors unsafe in domestic and sexual violence services in order to prevent transgender people from having the same protections as everyone else.

**Fact:** There is clear evidence that increasing access for transgender survivors does not decrease safety for other survivors. In 2016 over 300 domestic violence and sexual violence organizations across the country signed a [National Consensus Statement](#). In 2017, more than 60 chiefs of police, sheriffs, and law enforcement officers authored a [brief](#) in federal court supporting equal access for transgender students to public facilities. These leaders agree: transgender women victims being served alongside other women is appropriate and not a safety issue.

### **Voting for the motion to recommit is not voting for VAWA reauthorization**

**Myth:** Representatives who voted against H.R. 1585 are justifying their vote by saying they voted for the motion to recommit.

**Fact:** That is just an excuse to avoid looking bad. The motion to recommit would have reauthorized 22 of 29 VAWA grant programs (leaving out important programs such as Rape Prevention and Education) without making any of the vital improvements victims and survivors need.