

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE A  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

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**SPECIAL HEARING**

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# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1995

U.S. SENATE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES,  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met at 11:02 a.m., in room SD-192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Arlen Specter (chairman) presiding.  
Present: Senator Specter.

## NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

### STATEMENTS OF:

DENISE BROWN, SIMPSON CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
COLLEEN BURKETT, YORK, PA  
MARGARET HINTZ, LITITZ, PA  
SUSAN KELLY-DREISS, THE PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
DONNA LAWSON, COVINGTON, PA

### OPENING REMARKS OF SENATOR ARLEN SPECTER

Senator SPECTER. Let me say preliminarily that the authorization for full funding in the Violence Against Women legislation is \$50 million, and speaking as the chairman of the subcommittee, that is my inclination.

The House has funded the amount of \$32 million. What we are seeking to do today is to get a more substantial factual basis, though there is plenty in the public record at the present time. But we have convened this panel for this purpose.

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF DENISE BROWN

I would like to call first, Ms. Denise Brown, Ms. Colleen Burkett, Ms. Margaret Hintz, Ms. Susan Kelly-Dreiss, and Ms. Donna Lawson, if you women would all come forward.

For those who have submitted statements, they will all be made a part of the record. We thank you for joining us. To the extent that you can confine your opening remarks to the 5 minutes, we would be appreciative.

In alphabetical order, we begin with you, Ms. Brown. Thank you for joining us.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. My name is Denise Brown. I would like to thank Senator Specter for inviting me here today. I am here under unfortunate circumstances. I am here today to tell you how

important it is to educate yourselves and your community on family violence.

I will be the first one to admit that I was very naive about domestic violence, because at the beginning of all this, I didn't know what domestic violence was. I was the first one to say that I did not think that Nicole was a battered woman.

It is because I did not understand, I did not realize, I did not know what domestic violence was. We were not raised in that kind of a household.

As I see it now, I understand that even with what we knew, for us not to have known is much too typical. I learned about it from her. I learned about it from the notes and the diaries that she left behind. I learned about it too late.

After reading her diary, I knew that Nicole was a battered woman, and now she is gone. My sister was murdered last year.

It was through that tragedy that I made a commitment to myself and to Nicole that I would do whatever I could to help get other women out of the trap of domestic violence, and yet, we are all from a national family that continues to experience the deaths of three women a day at the hands of an intimate.

The L.A. County district attorney, alone, files 10 homicide cases a month due to domestic violence. But domestic violence is not about numbers and statistics, it is about our mothers, daughters, sisters, and loved ones, and the House and the Senate debate, and cut funds, and argue, and continue to play politics while women die.

Even now, the Senate seems poised to cut almost \$100 million from the funds that were committed by the Violence Against Women Act legislation.

This \$100 million helps to provide education and services for women, children, judges, police, prosecutors, teachers, doctors, nurses, and government officials to save lives, and prevent the kind of heartache that my family and so many other families had to suffer.

It is the women whose deaths do not make it on the evening news who are counting on this Congress to do what is right. It is the women who live and die in silence and anonymity who rely on the family of the American people to say, this is enough.

Now, however, as you prepare to cut almost \$100 million from the funds that were committed by Violence Against Women Act legislation, it seems as though the Senate may instead be saying what the House has said all already, too bad.

Look at my sister's face and say, too bad, and I will challenge you every step of the way.

You may see the issue as just another piece of legislation, as another political battle to be won or lost for your party, and you could not be more wrong.

Senators Hatfield, Gramm, Stevens, Domenici, Gregg, and Cochran, I ask you not as Senators, but as men, to stand up and do what is right. With your help, we can make a difference.

I have seen what the issue is. This issue has names and faces. It takes away futures, and hopes, and dreams. It took away the mother of my niece and nephew. It took away the daughter of my mother and father. It took away my sister, my best friend.

If the Senate fails to fully fund the Violence Against Women Act, you will be condemning hundreds of thousands of more women and their children to a life of despair and death. The continuing cycle of violence, I have made a commitment to stop this cycle of violence.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

We now expect the Senate to maintain their commitment to the Violence Against Women Act.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for caring. And thank you very much for listening to me.

[The statement follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF DENISE BROWN

In testimony before a Senate subcommittee today, Denise Brown, sister of domestic violence and homicide victim Nicole Brown Simpson, urged Congress to provide full funding for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Ms. Brown is currently touring the U.S. in an effort to educate the public about the crisis of domestic violence.

"It is the women whose deaths don't make it on the evening news who are counting on this Congress to do what is right. It is the women who live and die in silence and anonymity who rely on the family of the American people to say "enough!" said Brown. "And yet, the Senate prepares to cut almost \$100 million from the funds that were committed by VAWA legislation."

"Domestic violence is not about numbers or statistics. It is about our mothers, daughters, sisters and loved ones," Brown told the subcommittee. "I pray to God that none of the Senators here today will have to experience the loss of a family member before you fully understand the horror of domestic violence."

"Last year, in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, the Congress enacted the Violence Against Women Act to address the problem of domestic violence by providing financial support and guidance to communities across the country. This money helps to provide education and services for children, adults, police, prosecutors, judges, doctors, nurses, teachers, and government officials to save lives and prevent the kind of heartache that my family, and so many other families, have been forced to suffer," continued Brown.

"If the Senate fails to fully fund the VAWA, you will be condemning hundreds of thousands of more women to a life of despair and death. I have made a commitment to help stem that tide. We now expect the Senate to maintain their commitment to the Violence Against Women Act," concluded Brown.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you very much, Ms. Brown, for your very compelling testimony.

In addition to being on the Appropriations Committee, I serve on the Judiciary Committee, and cosponsored Senator Biden's bill, which authorized very substantial funding to protect women against violence.

A portion of that funding comes to this subcommittee, on health and human services, and we will do everything we can to have the maximum funding.

Ms. BROWN. Wonderful.

Senator SPECTER. The House of Representatives has put in the figure of \$32 million. We think we can exceed that, and this testimony, your testimony, will be very helpful in the conference, which will follow action on the Senate floor, as we make allocations in a year with very, very great financial constraints. But we appreciate what you said, and we take it to heart.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you.

## SUMMARY STATEMENT OF COLLEEN BURKETT

Senator SPECTER. We now turn to Ms. Colleen Burkett, of York, PA.

Ms. Burkett is a businesswoman, has very extensive experience in community affairs, and she, herself, has been the victim of violence, and I think can shed some substantial light on the issues which the Congress is looking at today.

Thank you for joining us, Ms. Burkett. The floor is yours.

Ms. BURKETT. Thank you, Senator Specter. Thank you for allowing me to speak on this most important issue.

Over the past 11 years, I have twice faced the prospect of death. The first time was on April 16, 1984. I was on the second floor of my home, folding laundry, when I heard a noise in the downstairs hallway. As I approached the stairs, a stranger, with a gun, came up the steps, threatened to murder me, and then raped me.

Two years ago, on May 20, 1993, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. My prognosis, after three operations, 6 weeks of daily radiation therapy, and 10 months of chemotherapy is very good.

While both of these life experiences are completely different, they contain at least two common elements, both are women's issues, and both are life threatening. In the next few minutes, I would like to give you a little insight into these experiences, from my personal perspective.

I have always been active in the York, PA, community. I have served in leadership positions of numerous local organizations, including the United Way. I am presently the chairman of York General Authority. In addition, I run my own small company, employing four other women.

With all of this, in January 1994, ill from cancer, and with 3 months of chemotherapy to go, I decided to run for the Pennsylvania General Assembly. My issues, of course, were crime, education, and health care.

The reason for this decision was the understanding and knowledge that you, the legislators, have the power and control over funding.

Contrary to the current conventional wisdom, the impact of wisely spent funding is greater than all of the hours of well-managed, well-intentioned volunteerism. And this is my message today, the fate of funding for the Violence Against Women Act programs is at risk. The injury to victims may well be compounded by your actions.

Let me begin by trying to explain the healing process. With cancer, the healing process is mostly physical. Once the treatment ends, there is a slow, but steady physical renewal. Your energy returns, hair growth resumes, and a zest for life returns.

Unfortunately, as a victim of rape, the healing process is not quite that easy. Yes; the physical wounds heal, but the emotional scars never quite leave.

There is a strong support network, enormous amounts of information, and open dialog for the cancer victim and survivor. However, the victim of rape is often alone and suffers in silence, repeatedly hurt by cruel comments from uninformed people.

My life changed forever on that sunny April afternoon. Later that evening, when my husband brought me home from the hospital, there was a full Moon.

It took me years to get over the association of the full Moon and that day, that event. Can you imagine losing your sense of awe when gazing at the sky at night, with a magnificent full Moon?

The violence of rape robs women of so much. Part of the loss is very devastating, one's freedom and confidence, and some is very subtle, like not being able to look at the Moon. Time does permit healing, but the hidden horror never totally leaves.

My healing began when I finally was able to accept the fact that my life would never be the same. Many of the things that I liked best about myself and my life, I had to surrender in order to survive.

During my battle with cancer, I was struck by the differences between being a rape victim and a cancer victim. In the 11 years since the rape, much has been done in educating, detecting, and curing breast cancer. Little has been accomplished in educating and preventing rape.

Education and awareness are the critical factors to reduce violence against women. We live in an exciting information age. Progress can and will be made, but the financial resources must be available.

In every election campaign, crime prevention is a hot topic. Well, the time for debate has passed. Now, is the time and the hour for action and commitment.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

I urge your support for the funding of the Violence Against Women Act. Together, we can make a difference for women all across America.

Thank you most kindly for your time and consideration.

[The statement follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF COLLEEN M. BURKETT

Thank you for allowing me to speak on this most important issue. Over the past 11 years, I have twice faced the prospect of death.

The first time was on April 16, 1984. I was on the second floor of my home, folding laundry when I heard a noise in the downstairs hallway. As I approached the stairs, a stranger, with a gun came up the stairs, threatened to murder me and then raped me.

Two years ago, on May 20, 1993, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. My prognosis, after three operations, 6 weeks of daily radiation therapy and 10 months of chemotherapy, is very good.

While both of these "life experiences" are completely different, they contain at least two common elements: Both are "women's issues" and both are life threatening.

In the next few minutes, I would like to give you a little insight into these experiences from my personal perspective.

I have always been active in the York, Pennsylvania community. I have served in leadership positions of numerous local organizations including the United Way. I am presently the chairman of the York General Authority. In addition, I run my own, small company employing four women.

With all of this, in January 1994, ill from cancer and with 3 months of chemotherapy to go, I decided to run for the Pennsylvania General Assembly. My issues, of course, were crime, education, and health care. The reason for this decision was the understanding and knowledge that you, the legislators, have the power and control over funding. Contrary to the current conventional wisdom, the impact of wisely



spent funding is greater than all of the hours of well managed, well intentioned volunteers.

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There is a strong support network, enormous amounts of information, and open dialogue for the cancer victim and survivor. However, the victim of rape is often alone and suffers in silence \* \* \*. Repeatedly hurt by cruel comments from, uninformed people.

My life changed forever on that sunny, April afternoon. Later that evening, when my husband brought me home from the hospital, there was a full Moon. It took me years to get over the association of the full Moon and that day, that event. Can you imagine losing your sense of awe, when gazing at the night sky with a magnificent, full Moon. The violence of rape robs women of so much, part of the loss is very devastating, one's freedom and confidence and some is very subtle, like not looking at the Moon. Time does permit healing, but the hidden horror never totally leaves.

My healing began when I was finally able to accept the fact that life would never be the same. Many of the things that I liked best about myself and my life, I had to surrender in order to survive.

During my battle with cancer, I was struck by the differences between being a rape victim and a cancer victim. In the 11 years since the rape, much has been done in education, detecting and curing breast cancer. Little has been accomplished in education and preventing rape.

Education and awareness are the critical factors to reducing violence against women. We live in an exciting, information age, progress can and will be made, but the financial resources must be available.

In every election campaign, crime prevention is a hot topic. Well, the time for debate has passed. Now is the hour for action and commitment. I urge your support for the funding for the "Violence Against Women Act." Together we can make a difference for women in America.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you very much, Ms. Burkett, for sharing those experiences with us.

Was the perpetrator in the rape case apprehended and prosecuted?

Ms. BURKETT. He was not.

Senator SPECTER. He was not.

Ms. BURKETT. No.

Senator SPECTER. How are you doing on your medical problems?

Ms. BURKETT. Well, I was just at the University of Pennsylvania last week, and my doctor told me that I was doing very well, so I am being given a clean bill of health as I progress out from the cancer.

Senator SPECTER. We are glad to hear that.

Ms. BURKETT. Thank you.

#### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF MARGARET HINTZ

Senator SPECTER. I next turn to Ms. Margaret Hintz, a resident of Lititz, PA, who has had some substantial experiences with the problems of physical and emotional abuse. We thank you for being here, and the floor is yours.

Ms. HINTZ. I really do not want to be here. I never spoke to more than three people in my whole life before I was 58, but that is really when my life began, because when you are hit for the first time, and pushed, and choked, from then on, you are scared.

Do you know what it is like to be scared for 36 years, scared for your children, scared what might happen next? That is what happened to me.

I want to talk about the fifties, and sixties, and seventies, because from the beginning, I went for help. I went to psychiatrists, who told me to go home and fix my husband a martini, and let him sit for a while and rest before I bother him with my petty household annoyances.

He tried to fix me. We were in the military at the time. The chaplains were trying to fix me. They asked me if I ironed his shirts, if I ironed his uniforms.

"There must be something you are doing wrong, because, otherwise, you would not get hit."

This was in the fifties and sixties.

By the seventies, I was convinced I was doing something wrong, and I was trying desperately—by then I had two children. I was trying desperately to find what I was doing wrong, and every week I was correcting something, but there always was something else I got hit for.

When my children entered college, I guess I must have thought my job was done, because I went into a deep, deep depression, and I was hospitalized for 9 weeks in St. Joseph's Hospital, in Lancaster, when, for the first time, a psychiatrist said, "You do not deserve to be hit."

When I heard that, I told the psychiatrist all the bad things that I had done, I thought I had done. I was not sure I was hearing right.

I stayed in therapy for 2 years, and got stronger. During that time, with the seasons, I would change clothes—under a jumper cable, and other tools for the car, I would have clothes. I called it my getaway clothes, in case I had to leave, and I had to do it many times.

The last time—as I was getting stronger, the violence got worse. The last time, my husband broke a picture, and had a piece of glass to my throat. I had been married then for 37 years. And everything in my body cried out to get out.

In the meantime, I watched the newspapers for shelters that opened, for legislation that was being passed. I finally started to see that there was some help. And when I thought I had everything in place, I went and got a protection order.

The protection order was served the very same day. He was put out of the house. People told me I did not deserve to be hit. Finally, somebody was helping me, after 36 years.

I was 58. We were upper middle class. We took three or four vacations a year. My son is an Eagle Scout. Both my children graduated from Penn State.

We looked like the perfect family, because, unlike when you get hit outside your home, my first reaction to when I got hit was to close all the windows and all the doors so nobody would hear. I always said I was my husband's best ally.

But finally somebody helped me. After 36 years, I got a protection order, and at least for me, I know it does not work for everybody, but for me, all the laws that are in place worked.

They all worked. And I got out after 36, although, I do not think I ever will lose my fear, but I am not nearly as scared as I used to be.

For the last 3 years, I have been a volunteer for the Pennsylvania Shelter for Abused Women and Lancaster Legal Services. I go to court every Thursday.

And you are familiar with Lancaster, conservative Lancaster, last Thursday, we had 34 women and 1 man in court, with 1 lawyer, Michael Burke, a paralegal, and myself. Most of them were pro se, because they have not been able to get an appointment at Lancaster Legal Services.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

You cannot go backward. The women need your help. All this talk about family values—how can you talk about family values, when women and children are not safe? This land of the free, I was not free for 36 years, but I am now.

I am not as eloquent as a lot of people about, I cannot make speeches, but I hope I get across to you how important it is to help women and children.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARGARET HINTZ

Margaret Hintz, a resident of Lititz, Pennsylvania, was a "military wife" and a mother for 34 years. During her marriage, she was the victim of physical, and emotional abuse which increased in frequency and intensity over the years.

Her abuse began in 1954, when she and her husband moved to the United States from her native Germany. Thinking that her husband would be pleased with her efforts to supplement the family budget by taking a part-time job, Margaret was shocked to become the victim of her husband's violence as he sought to prevent her from working outside their home, and by his progressively more threatening action to isolate her from friends and family members—anyone, in short, who might listen to her and try to help her.

During this time, Margaret tried, in every way she knew how, to get the help she needed. She confided in the post Chaplain, only to be told to "go back home and do what she had to do to make her husband happy." When she spoke with her doctor, he joined in the victim-blaming by advising her to "make him a martini, so he can relax."

From 1982 to 1984, Margaret kept a packed suitcase hidden in the back of her car, ready to get away from her batterer when she had the opportunity. She knew that she would have only one chance, and that she could not fail, or leave a way for him to follow her, or he would kill her. He had told her that on many occasions. She simply had no where to go.

In 1984, exhausted emotionally and physically from sustaining years of terror and physical trauma, Margaret collapsed and spent nine weeks in a hospital, where for the first time, a physician told her that the abuse was not her fault, and that she did not have to take it any more.

It was in this way that Margaret began the long journey which would end with a protection from abuse order against her husband, and a divorce which ended their marriage. She entered a battered women's shelter and found the counseling and support which empowered her to continue her struggle.

For the past three years, Ms. Hintz has worked as a volunteer for the Lancaster Shelter for Battered Women in Lancaster, PA, and for Legal Services, accompanying battered women and their children to court.

Senator SPECTER. Well, Ms. Hintz, I think you are very eloquent, indeed. The printed record will not show it, so I will say that you have spoken without text, without notes, and, obviously, straight from the heart.

Have you solved this problem of your husband's abuse at the present time?

Ms. HINTZ. I am now divorced. My children and I have our own little family. We are very close. I am happier than I have ever been in my life. And I am going to soon be 63.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you very much.

#### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SUSAN KELLY-DREISS

I now call on Ms. Susan Kelly-Dreiss, 25 years experience in working with victims of domestic violence, both to women and children. For the past 16 years, she has been executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Thank you for joining us, and the floor is yours, Ms. Kelly-Dreiss.

Ms. KELLY-DREISS. Thank you, Senator. It is a pleasure to be here.

I am representing the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, it has 63 local domestic violence programs in our State, and also the National Network to End Domestic Violence, which is comprised of the 50 State coalitions against domestic violence, and the District of Columbia.

I am here to ask the Senate, in the strongest way possible, to fully fund the Violence Against Women Act programs for 1996.

I am joined in this request by a multitude of diverse organizations, from the Girl Scouts, the League of Women Voters, the National Organization for Victim Assistance, the American Jewish Congress, and the National Black Women's Health Project.

As you know, the Violence Against Women Act was a bipartisan effort in Congress. Just recently, a bipartisan group of Senators wrote to Chairman Hatfield, requesting full funding for this act.

Those Senators include Senators Snowe, Hatch, Kyl, Grassley, Biden, Moseley-Braun, and Rockefeller.

I am honored to be here with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families. We acknowledge the thousands of women and children in this country who are terrorized, brutalized, killed, sometimes by strangers, but more often by those that they love.

It has only been recently that the criminal justice system has begun to view violence against women as a serious criminal problem.

In domestic violence cases, the incidents used to be looked upon as just a private dispute. In stranger cases, as in some cases of sexual assault, the incident was often blamed more on the victim, than on the perpetrator.

But things are changing. There has been a growing number of local programs established throughout the last 20 years, including over 1,850 domestic programs, and 1,140 sexual assault programs throughout the country.

There are now some criminal justice agencies with exemplary policies and protocols, and, in fact, have units especially designed for investigations.

This is why this act is so important now. While there is recognition nationally of this problem, now is the critical time to build on what the local communities have started.

Recently, such polls as the Time Magazine-CNN poll, conducted just a few months ago, indicate that domestic violence is an issue which the public identifies as a serious problem, and one that they care about.

The local initiatives that are happening now include such programs as the law enforcement and prosecution grants, that includes the training of police and prosecutors, the development of special units, and the development of effective police and prosecution policies and protocols.

There are stop grants sponsored by the Department of Justice, designed especially for these programs, as a result of violence against women.

I sit on the Violence Against Women Committee in Pennsylvania, along with judges, district attorneys, and victim services.

The first thing that we were able to agree on in Pennsylvania was that whatever improvements were made for police and prosecutors' agencies, there needed to be commensurate improvements in funding for the victim services, because as soon as we have improved policies in the police department, we know we have more referrals.

As soon as we have a unit in the prosecutor's office, we know that the hotlines are going to start increasing.

The Violence Against Women Act programs, under the authority of this subcommittee, need full funding, to ensure victims that services will be there when they call. These are lifelines for victims.

These programs include the national domestic violence hotline, assistance to victims of sexual assault education and prevention, community programs on domestic violence, and battered women's shelters.

During the House deliberations recently, the House did not appropriate the \$15 million for battered women's shelters authorized for 1996. I want to underscore the need for that shelter money.

This is the keystone of our services. Shelters are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They keep women safe.

So I sit here today with mixed emotions. I am grateful to you, Senator Specter, for your leadership on domestic violence, and, in particular, for your help in passing the Violence Against Women Act.

However, we are disappointed in the congressional actions so far. We know there is support for this act. We also were promised that there would be a trust fund made up of approximately 270,000 full-time employee cuts, so that the funding would be there.

We are wondering now why is that commitment not there to carry this out.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

We are here to ask you for two specific requests. First, we urge the subcommittee to fully fund the Violence Against Women Act programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Second, we urge you to fight to restore the \$75 million that was not appropriated by the Commerce, Justice, State Subcommittee, for the Department of Justice programs.

In closing, I want to thank Senator Specter for giving attention to this important issue.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUSAN KELLY-DREISS

Good morning. My name is Susan Kelly-Dreiss and I am here today to testify on behalf of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence representing 63 local, community-based domestic violence programs in our state. I am also representing the National Network Against Domestic Violence comprised of the 50 state domestic violence coalitions and the District of Columbia. This national organization focuses on national public policy and public education about domestic violence.

I am here to ask the Senate, in the strongest way possible, to fully fund the Violence Against Women Act programs for 1996.

I am joined in this request for VAWA funding by a multitude of diverse organizations, including the Girl Scouts, USA, the League of Women Voters, the National Organization for Victim's Assistance, Business and Professional Women of the USA, the American Jewish Congress, the National Black Women's Health Project, and the YWCA.

As you know, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was a bipartisan effort in Congress. Just recently, a bipartisan group of Senators wrote to Chairman Hatfield requesting full funding for VAWA. Senators who signed the letter include Senators Snowe, Hatch, Kyl, Grassley, Biden, Moseley-Braun, and Rockefeller.

I am honored to be here with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families as they speak out with great courage about violence against women. We acknowledge the thousands of women and children in this country who are terrorized, brutalized, and killed, sometimes by strangers, but more often by their partners or ex-partners. The Department of Justice estimates that there are over one million incidents of domestic violence annually in the U.S., and that one-third of all female murder victims over age 14 were killed by a boyfriend, spouse, or ex-spouse.

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop identified violence against women by their partners as the number one health problem for women in the U.S. Yet we also know that less than half of all violent crime against women is ever reported to law enforcement officials. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1994).

It is only recently that society in general, and the criminal justice system in particular, have begun to view violence against women as a serious criminal problem. In domestic violence cases, where the victim knows the perpetrator, the incident was considered a private dispute and not a crime at all. When violence against women came at the hands of a stranger, as in some cases of sexual assault, the incident was often blamed more on the victim than on the perpetrator.

But things are changing! There has been a growing number of services for victims established in the U.S. during the last twenty years. Currently there are over 1,850 local, community-based domestic violence programs and 1,140 sexual assault programs. There are some criminal justice agencies which have developed exemplary policies and protocols for responding to domestic and sexual assault and special units for investigations.

This is why the VAWA is so important now. While there is recognition of this serious problem—now is the critical time to build upon what has started at the local level. In every state in this country there are local initiatives about violence against women and national public opinion polls, such as the Time Magazine/CNN poll (conducted in January, 1995) indicated that domestic violence is an issue which the public identifies as a serious problem and one that they care about.

VAWA assures that communities across the country will have the opportunity to advance creative solutions to address domestic violence and sexual assault. The Act offers greatly needed financial support for local communities and the states which lack the resources and the coordination necessary to effectively implement new laws and policies. There is growing consensus about what works—what is needed now are the resources to see that program initiatives happen!

For example, the Law Enforcement and Prosecution Grants, known as the STOP grants will fund: the training of police and prosecutors; the development of special units to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault; the development of more effective police and prosecution policies and services; and the development and improvement of data collection and communications systems linking police, prosecution, and the courts in order to track arrests, protection orders, prosecutions and convictions.

STOP grant will also strengthen victim services such as court advocacy programs. This is especially important because we have learned that victims of domestic and sexual assault will be better informed about the legal system and less reluctant to drop charges if they have an advocate to assist them through the system.

As a requirement to receive STOP Grant funds, each state has established a VAWA committee to provide leadership and coordination of the state's efforts. I sit on the committee in Pennsylvania along with judges, prosecutors, police, and victim services. The first decision which the committee made, and made unanimously, was that the planned improvements for criminal justice agencies must be made in tandem with increased funding for services. Our committee knew that as soon as the police adopted a new protocol, referrals to victim services would increase significantly. As soon as training programs are implemented for police and prosecutors, more calls will come to victim services hotlines.

The VAWA programs under the authority of this subcommittee need full funding to assure that vital services will be there for victims when they call. Such programs are the lifelines for victims. These programs include: National Domestic Violence Hotline; Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault, Education and Prevention; Community Programs on Domestic Violence; Rural Domestic Violence/Child Abuse Programs; and Battered Women's Shelters.

During House Appropriations deliberations, the House inexplicably did not appropriate the \$15 million for Battered Women's Shelters authorized for 1996. I want to underscore the need for this particular program funding. The keystone of domestic violence services is the shelter component, because shelters keep women threatened with abuse safe. Shelters are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and function as "homicide prevention centers." Shelter programs also provide comprehensive services to victims and their children including: hotline, safety planning, counseling, advocacy, information and referral, children's programs, school programs, community education, prevention programs, and training. This comprehensive approach to assisting victims of domestic violence works. Last year in Pennsylvania, over 100,000 victims received assistance through our network of programs.

I sit before you today with mixed emotions. I am grateful to you, Chairman Specter, for your leadership on domestic violence issues, and in particular, for your efforts in helping to enact and fund the historic Violence Against Women Act. However, I am also very disappointed in recent congressional action on VAWA funding. Despite the current broad base of support for the Violence Against Women Act, and the overwhelming bipartisan vote of the Congress that enacted VAWA just last year, this Congress is on the verge of gutting the Act by significantly underfunding its programs. As you may know, the House of Representatives failed to appropriate over \$100 million of authorized funds for 1996 VAWA programs (of which \$15 million is for Battered Women's Shelters). Just last week, the Commerce, Justice, State Subcommittee in the Senate cut an additional \$25 million from Justice Department VAWA programs. Frankly, we are completely puzzled about why Congress has suddenly lost its commitment to combating the serious crisis of domestic violence.

When the Violence Against Women Act was passed last year, Congressional Republicans and Democrats proudly took the credit they deserved for enacting the most comprehensive and effective program in history to reduce the violent crime that devastates millions of families every year. Toward the end, more than \$1.6 billion was authorized to be spent over the next 6 years for grants to combat domestic violence and sexual assault. To ensure that this money would be available, it was designated to be funded through the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund with the money saved by cutting the federal workforce by 270,000 full-time employees. It is my understanding that the deficit reduction targets in the 1996 budget resolution were developed with the understanding that most of the Trust Fund monies will be spent, meaning that the money is available to fund VAWA without adding to the deficit. And, as the testimony of today's witnesses so eloquently attests, the need to address the problems of domestic violence and sexual assault is at least as critical now as it was when VAWA was passed. So, why is Congress, less than one year later, turning its back on its commitment to fund VAWA?

Fortunately, there is time to save the Violence Against Women Act because the Appropriations process is not over yet. I am here with two urgent requests for this subcommittee, and particularly, for Chairman Specter, one of the most forceful and effective advocates for the Violence Against Women Act. First, we urge this subcommittee to fully fund the VAWA programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services that are under your jurisdiction. Second, we urge you to fight to restore the \$75 million that was not appropriated by the Commerce, Justice, State Subcommittee for Department of Justice VAWA programs. To do anything less is to betray last year's promises to the victims of VAW.

In closing, I want to thank Senator Specter and members of this Subcommittee for giving attention to the Violence Against Women Act.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you very much, Ms. Kelly-Dreiss.

These are issues that I have worked on for a very, very long time, since my days as district attorney of Philadelphia, where we were very vigilant on this issue. It has been a problem forever.

It has only recently come into public view, so that women are given support to make complaints about it, short of homicide.

Senator Biden was the leader in the Violence Against Women Act when we had an authorization, which was enormous, which was very substantial, \$1.6 billion, and now we are fighting to at least fully fund the portion within the jurisdiction of this subcommittee. This testimony is very helpful.

#### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF DONNA LAWSON

We now turn to Ms. Donna Lawson, the mother of a young woman who was murdered by her abusive ex-boyfriend in 1993. I understand, since that time, Ms. Lawson has devoted herself to strengthen the laws in this very important area.

I know any testimony on this subject is very difficult for a mother, Ms. Lawson, and I can see the tears in your eyes now, but to the extent you can share that information with us, we would be appreciative.

Ms. LAWSON. Thank you, Senator Specter. If you would bear with me, I will make it through.

First, I want to show you something. This, as you know, is a stint bullet; when it enters, it blows. This is one that was found in my daughter's car.

I do not know that it hit her; I do not know if it did not. It came to rest in her son's book bag in the back seat of the car. I am showing that to you, because I want to put you on my emotional level, closer to it, at least.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you my family's experience with the anguish and horror of domestic violence.

My name is Donna Lawson. I live in Covington, Tioga County, PA. My murdered daughter's name is Shelly Johnson. She was 33 years old, the mother of three young sons, and a special education teacher, who had recently been awarded her master's degree.

Our nightmare began when Shelly moved in with her boyfriend, John Flood, and they made plans to marry. Things appeared fine at first; however, within 6 months, Flood began to change.

He became mean, controlling, and demanding. In the following 3-year period, she became increasingly afraid of him, as his verbal and physical abuse intensified.

Upon asking him to leave several times, his reply was always the same, "I'll kill you."

She was terrified of him, and so, out of fear, she stayed; that is, until one day the physical abuse became so brutal and the emotional abuse became so traumatizing that she did not know which way to turn.

Battered and bruised, she turned to me and welcomed my strength. I took her home that day. Unfortunately, as is often the case in domestic violence and stalking situations, this did not put an end to John Flood's menacing presence in my daughter's life.



Flood would stalk my home as well as my brother's home. The PA antistalking bill had not yet passed the legislature. It was not yet a law.

He would come in my yard, stand there and stare, and refuse to leave. As darkness fell, he would attempt to force his way into my home. I would have a large chair against each door.

He would shout obscenities, pound on the house walls, demand Shelly to come outside, slit my tires with a knife, stare through the windows, threaten to kill us, and even a couple of times, made sure I saw his gun in the moonlight.

This usually started around 11 p.m. at night, and lasted until about 3 a.m., and was almost a nightly occurrence. Shelly would be upstairs sleeping from exhaustion. Her boys were good sleepers, at least most of the time. Of course, I would keep the lights off so he could not see me.

After many nights of no police response, my brother brought a gun down, in case I had to use it. I would sit there awake all night, and sleep during the day.

The State police had advised me that we had to have a Protection From Abuse Order [PFA], and they could do nothing, unless I did.

They still hold to this story, despite the fact that after Shelly's death, I learned that what was happening at my home and to Shelly, forcing her off the road, death threats to both of us, was insufficient grounds for me to obtain a PFA.

I took the police department's word that they could not do anything to help my daughter or me, even though they and others knew the frightening details of John Flood's terrorism.

We live in a rural, low-population area, in a county with about 40,000 residents. It was a 1-hour drive for Shelly to her teaching job at Riverside School, in Elmira. Her journey to school each day was through a scattering of houses and farms. There was truly nowhere she could go for help, if needed.

Almost daily, Flood would force her car off the road, coming from school, and then threaten what he would do to her if she did not return to his home. He also said he would cut me up in pieces and send me to her, or else burn me up in my home. This all happened over a 10-week period.

I repeatedly called the State police, as did my brother, who also attempted to get the State police to intervene. I logged most of my own calls.

We received no help, only reminders that we needed a PFA in order for the police to respond. But Shelly was fearful of seeking a PFA, because Flood had warned her if she did get a PFA, he would kill her, and she knew he meant it.

Several police officers at different times asked me about the identity of Shelly's abuser, and when they found out he was John Flood, they confirmed that he was trouble.

In one of Flood's many trips to my house late at night, the neighbor's dog would not stop barking. In the morning, the flesh was missing off the whole side of the dog. It almost died. I want you to know that my neighbors knew of my family's plight.

June 11, 1993, a Friday morning, the day after Shelly's oldest son, 12 years old, graduated from sixth grade with honors, Shelly

was taking her usual route to school. That was her last day on this Earth.

Flood was waiting for her along the road with two guns, a .22 and a .44 magnum. He chased her, unloading the .44 on her and her car, first. Then he picked up the .22. All this time, he was trying to force her off the road.

He also emptied this gun and finally forced her car off the road, with her car coming to rest on its side. Several people know what happened next.

He reloaded the .44, went over to her car, put the gun tight to her left temple, and pulled the trigger, twice. He then went into the woods, heading for home.

As the result of numerous police calls and the shots, there was a helicopter in the air. Aware that it was searching for him, Flood went to the river bed, wrote messages on the rocks with a bullet, and proceeded to shoot himself as police approached.

I had read many horror stories in the newspaper such as this one, but it never really affected me, other than I felt sorry for those people. I did not know them, it did not sink in.

I would like each and every one of you to put yourself in my place for this next part of my short testimony, and think how you would react if it was your child.

I went out to the scene of the crime. I saw my daughter's body in the car. She had no eyes, she had no bridge of her nose, she had a big hole in her forehead, a few pieces of flesh missing throughout her face, and her mouth drawn off to the side. And besides the bullet holes, the left side of her head I can only describe as mush.

No one on God's Earth should ever have to go through this horror, which will haunt me the rest of my life.

I implore each and every one of you to please do something to stop the violence and killing of innocent and helpless victims. I urge you to consider the following recommendations.

One, we need uniformity in police response to domestic violence calls. All calls to police should be logged and responded to. All calls to police should be logged and responded to. I said that twice, so it sticks.

We must have mandatory law enforcement. I cannot emphasize this enough.

Two, we seem to have a widespread problem at all levels within law enforcement of police officers of having protection orders issued against them. While they are enforcing the law, not breaking the law, we should know that far too many police officers abuse their wives or girlfriends.

This is a glaringly apparent conflict of interest, and those officers having protection orders entered against them should be dismissed, suspended, or at least prohibited from responding to domestic violence calls for the duration of their order.

Three, training for police and domestic violence is extremely inadequate. This leads to very large gaps in protection. Mandatory training and funding are essential.

As we know, domestic violence crimes are escalating and have reached an all-time high. Services where women can go for help is of the utmost importance. Help these women get the funding to get

on their feet. They are not asking for handouts, just a chance to protect themselves and their children.

Four, law enforcement needs to have legal and binding responsibility to respond to and protect victims of domestic violence. I fully believe my daughter's murder might have been prevented if only our pleas had been heeded.

Five, police need to place domestic violence calls, not pursuit of speeders and traffic violators, as a top priority.

Six, take a closer look at the plea bargaining system that takes place between prosecutors and perpetrators in this country. Shelly and I were very close. My life has changed forever. I now have a life sentence.

I have post-stress-traumatic syndrome, flashbacks. On a good day, there are 9 to 11 an hour. I have much-increased pain in existing physical conditions. I sleep very little, and have constant night terrors. All of these have affected my walking.

And this is the last one, seven, please fully fund the Violence Against Women Act. The provisions contained in this one piece of legislation will provide for training law enforcement officials and prosecutors, strengthen legal protections for victims, and assure vitally needed resources to shelter programs and counseling centers across the country.

Keep the promise made last September, when Democrats and Republicans, Senators and House Members, came together to pass this bill, which for the first time, addressed the issue of violence against women, and said it is a crime.

In closing, I would like to thank you for shedding light on the dark and devastating violence that is occurring behind the closed doors of neighborhoods and communities across the country.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

Please do not let my daughter's tragic death be just one more statistic added to the endless grim tally.

For the future of our families, and for the well-being of our children, let us work together to make our homes the safe havens they were meant to be.

Thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF DONNA LAWSON

##### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: NOT JUST A FAMILY MATTER

Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to share with you my family's experience with the anguish and horror of domestic violence.

My name is Donna Lawson. I live in Covington, Tioga County, PA. My murdered daughter's name is Shelly Johnson. She was just 33 years old, the mother of two young sons, and a special education teacher who had recently been awarded her masters degree

Our nightmare began when Shelly moved in with her boyfriend John Flood, and they made plans to marry. Things appeared fine at first; however, within 6 months, Flood began to change. He became mean, controlling and demanding. In the following 3 year period, she became increasingly afraid of him as his verbal and physical abuse intensified. Upon asking him to leave several times, his reply was always the same—"I'll kill you." She was terrified of him and so, out of fear, she stayed—that is until the day when the physical abuse became so brutal and the emotional abuse so traumatizing that she didn't know which way to turn. Battered and bruised, she turned to me and welcomed my strength. I took her home that day. Unfortunately,

as is often the case in domestic violence and stalking situations, this didn't put an end to John Flood's menacing presence in my daughter's life.

Flood would stalk my home as well as my brother's home. (PA's anti-stalking bill had not yet passed the legislature; it was still not a law.) He would come in my yard, stand there and stare, and refuse to leave. As darkness fell, he would attempt to force his way into my house. I would have a large chair against each door. He would shout obscenities, pound on the house walls, demand Shelly come outside, slit my tires with a knife, stare through the windows, threaten to kill us, and, even a couple of times, make sure I saw his gun in the Moon light. This usually started around 11 at night, last till about 3 a.m., and was almost a nightly occurrence. Shelly would be upstairs sleeping from exhaustion. Her boys were also good sleepers—at least most of the time. Of course I would keep the lights off so he couldn't see me.

After many nights of no police response, my brother brought a gun down, in case I had to use it. I would sit there awake all night and sleep during the day. The State Police had advised me that we had to have a Protection From Abuse Order (PFA) and they could do nothing unless we did. They still hold to this story, despite the fact that after Shelly's death I learned that what was happening at my home and to Shelly (forcing her off the road, death threats to both of us) was insufficient grounds to even obtain a PFA, but in fact, did come under other laws. I took the police department's word that they couldn't do anything to help my daughter, even though they knew the frightening details of John Flood's terrorism.

We live in a rural, low population area, in a county with about 40,000 residents. It was a one-hour drive for Shelly to her teaching job at Riverside School, Elmira, NY. Her journey to school each day was through a scattering of houses and farms; there truly was nowhere she could go for help if needed. Almost daily, Flood would force her car off the road coming from school, and then threaten what he would do to her if she didn't return to his home.

He also said he would cut me up in pieces and send me to her or else burn me up in my house. This all happened over a 10-week period.

I repeatedly called the State Police, as did my brother, who also attempted to get the police to intervene. (I logged most of these calls.) We received no help, only reminders that we needed PFA in order for police to respond. But Shelly was fearful of seeking a PFA because Flood had warned her that if she got a PFA, he would kill her, and she knew he meant it. Several police officers at different times asked about the identity of Shelly's abuser, and when they found out it was John Flood, they confirmed "he was trouble". In one of Flood's many trips to my house late at night, the neighbor's dog wouldn't stop barking. In the morning, the flesh was missing off the whole side of the dog; it almost died. I want you to know that my neighbors knew of my family's plight.

June 11, 1993—a Friday morning, the day after Shelly's oldest son (12 years) graduated from sixth grade with honors—Shelly was taking her usual route to school. That was her last day on this Earth. Flood was waiting for her along the road with two guns, a .22 and a .44 magnum. He chased her, unloading the .44 on her and her car first. He then picked up the .22. All this time he was trying to force her off the road. He also emptied this gun and finally forced her off the road, with her car coming to rest on its side. Several people witnessed what happened next: He reloaded the .44, went over to her car, put the gun tight to her left temple and pulled the trigger twice. He then went into the woods, heading for home. As the result of numerous calls to police of a car being chased and shot at, they had a helicopter in the air. Aware that it was searching for him, Flood went to the riverbed, wrote messages on rocks with a bullet, and proceeded to shoot himself as police approached.

I had read many horror stories in the newspaper such as this one, but it never really affected me, other than I felt sorry for those people. I didn't know them—it didn't sink in. I would like each and every one of you to put yourself in my place for this next part of my testimony, and to think how you would react if it were your child; you really can't understand the impact otherwise.

I went out to the scene of the crime; I saw my daughter's body in what was left of her car. She had no eyes, no bridge of her nose, a big hole in her forehead, a few pieces of flesh missing throughout her face, mouth drawn off to the side and, besides the bullet holes, the left side of her head was what I can only describe as "mush." No one on God's Earth should ever have to go through this horror which will haunt me the rest of my life.

I implore each and every one of you to please do something to stop the violence and killing of innocent and helpless victims. I urge you to consider the following recommendations as a step towards preventing more loss of lives:

1. We need uniformity in police response to domestic violence calls. All calls to police should be logged and responded to. We must have mandatory law enforcement response. I can't emphasize this enough—it gives responsibility and accountability. I have found out since that none of my calls were logged.

2. We seem to have a wide-spread problem at all levels within law enforcement of police officers having protection orders issued against them. While police should be enforcing the law—not breaking the law—we know that far too many police officers abuse their wives or girlfriends. How can we expect these officers to arrest other batterers? There is a glaringly apparent conflict of interest, and those officers having protection orders entered against them should be dismissed, suspended, or, at the very least, prohibited from responding to domestic violence calls for the duration of the order.

3. Training for police on domestic violence is extremely inadequate. This leads to very large gaps in protection. Mandatory training and funding are essential. As we all know, domestic violence crimes are escalating and have reached an all-time high. Services where women can go in need of help—somewhere to turn to—are of the utmost importance. Help these women with funding to get on their feet. They're not asking for a hand-out, just a chance to protect themselves and their children.

4. Law enforcement needs to have legal and binding responsibility to respond to and protect victims of domestic violence. I fully believe my daughter's murder might have been prevented if only our pleas for help had been heeded. Police should be held liable when they fail to protect.

5. Police need to place domestic violence calls, not pursuit of speeders and traffic violators as a top priority. Isn't it time?

6. Take a closer look at plea bargaining that is taking place between prosecutors and perpetrators in this country. Shelly and I were very close. My life has changed forever. I now have a life sentence. I have Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, flash-backs (on a good day they're 9 to 11 an hour). I have much-increased pain in existing physical conditions. I sleep very little and have constant night terrors. All of these have affected my walking.

7. Fully fund the Violence Against Women Act. The provisions contained in this one piece of legislation will provide for training law enforcement officials and prosecutors, strengthen legal protections for victims, and assure vitally-needed resources to shelter programs and counseling centers across the country. Keep the promise made last September, when Democrats and Republicans, Senators and House Members came together to pass this bill, which for the first time addressed the issue of Violence Against Women—and said that it's a crime.

In closing, I would like to thank you for shedding light on the dark and devastating violence that is occurring behind the closed doors of neighborhoods and communities across the country. Please, don't let my daughter's tragic death be just one more statistic added to the endless grim tally. For the future of our families, for the well-being of our children, let's work together to make our homes the safe havens they were meant to be—free from fear, free from violence.

Thank you for your consideration and action.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you very much, Ms. Lawson, for your testimony.

What has been submitted here today is obviously very, very powerful. When you hear from a mother, as you have testified, or Ms. Hintz, about her own experiences with abuse, or Ms. Burkett, about her rape, or Ms. Brown, as to what happened to her sister, those are very compelling personal experiences, which say much more than anyone can say.

And Ms. Kelly-Dreiss, we thank you for the work you have done here.

As I look over our printouts, they are extraordinarily complicated, this is one page, and they go inches thick, we have too many categories where we fund many, too many sources, and it is very difficult to get it consolidated to keep a close handle on it.

What Ms. Brown was referring to was an authorization in another subcommittee for \$192 million, which was funded at \$1.9 million, and it may be possible to make a change on that, yet. I do not know. That is in another subcommittee.

I do not have to tell you how tight funding is, as we are on a path for a balanced budget for the year 2002, but this business about the shelters, where women have someplace to go, has an authorization of \$50 million, and the House has appropriated \$32 million, and the chairman's mark, that is my mark, will be \$50 million, for full authorization, which will be submitted to the subcommittee tomorrow, and then to the full committee, and then ultimately, to the Senate.

Your testimony will be very, very helpful in at least achieving that full appropriation.

#### CONCLUSION OF HEARING

We thank you very much for coming. The subcommittee will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

[Whereupon, at 11:41 a.m., Tuesday, September 12, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

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