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May 8, 2012

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) joined several of his colleagues late yesterday in continuing to advocate for a bipartisan approach to the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), a key component of our public safety network. Bass and seven other Republicans and Democrats sent a [letter to the House Judiciary Committee](#) urging the Chairman and Ranking Member to move forward on a bipartisan VAWA reauthorization bill as soon as possible.

**Bass** said, "Preventing violence against women, children, and all individuals is not and cannot be a partisan issue. The Violence Against Women Act has been an instrumental tool in helping law enforcement, prosecutors, health professionals, and service providers hold offenders accountable and keep our communities safe. I urge House Leadership to bring bipartisan legislation to the floor as soon as possible so we can reauthorize these vital programs and ensure victims of abuse have access to the care, services, and support they need to move forward with their lives."

**Kim France, the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence**, said, "The NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (NHCADSV) and our 14 member programs applaud Congressman Bass' efforts to promote a bipartisan agenda for reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). NHCADSV encourages all members of the House of Representatives to, like Congressman Bass, work together to pass a bipartisan bill that helps all victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking."

Bass is the lead Republican cosponsor of the bipartisan Violence Against Women Health Initiative Act (H.R. 1578), which reauthorizes three existing health programs within VAWA that are designed to strengthen the health care system's response to and identification of victims through an enhanced public health response to abuse.

The text of the letter to the House Judiciary Committee follows:

May 7, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

We support a bipartisan reauthorization of the 1994 landmark Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA is long overdue for renewal.

The Violence Against Women Act recognizes the insidious and pervasive nature of domestic violence. With each reauthorization, Congress has worked carefully to craft improved, enhanced, and accountable programs and services, as well as comprehensive community responses, with the goal of providing effective and cost saving assistance to victims of dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking crimes. Law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, health

professionals, counselors, educators and service providers efficiently use VAWA programs to hold offenders accountable and keep communities safe. Recent studies estimate that VAWA has saved more than \$12.6 billion dollars in net averted economic and social costs to our families and our communities.

While VAWA programs have saved countless lives and greatly enhanced systemic changes to meet the needs of victims, key improvements are necessary to meet the law's original intent. VAWA's reauthorization must build upon its successes and continue progress towards breaking the cycle and culture of violence by streamlining programs, enhancing criminal justice responses for sexual assault victims, and strengthening prevention programs for young people. VAWA must reach all victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in every community in the country.

The Violence Against Women Act is a critical component of our public safety network. Its reauthorization is directly tied to the safety of our schools, workplaces, and communities. We urge the Judiciary Committee to consider key improvements to meet the needs of all victims in a bipartisan VAWA reauthorization.

Sincerely,

Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL-13)  
Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL-05)  
Rep. Jon Runyan (R-NJ-03)  
Rep. David Reichert (R-WA-08)  
Rep. Charles Dent (R-PA-15)  
Rep. Robert Dold (R-IL-10)  
Rep. Patrick Meehan (R-PA-07)  
Rep. Charles F. Bass (R-NH-02)

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