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August 15, 2012

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) issued the following statement today after calling on House leadership to act on a bipartisan reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as soon as Congress returns to Washington in September.

Bass said:

“It is time for Congress to resolve any differences that remain and act on what is a bipartisan, bicameral consensus on the need to reauthorize VAWA. Having worked closely throughout this debate with New Hampshire organizations that assist victims of violence, I understand the important role that VAWA programs play in our state. Whether providing resources for our law enforcement, prosecutors, health professionals, or service providers, VAWA is a critical element of our public safety network that helps to hold offenders accountable and keep our communities safe.

“The reauthorization of VAWA must not be subject to partisan posturing. I am committed to working with my colleagues to advance consensus legislation that will protect all victims of violence, including those seeking the assistance at the crisis centers in New Hampshire.”

Kim France, the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, said, “We applaud Congressman Bass for taking on a leadership role in the effort to pass a bipartisan version of VAWA. We join him in urging Congress to act immediately upon their return to reauthorize this important piece of legislation that will help to ensure that victims will have access to effective, life saving services.”

Bass has been a strong supporter of reauthorizing VAWA in a bipartisan manner. He previously joined seven of his Republican and Democratic colleagues in sending a [letter](#) to the House Judiciary Committee urging the Chairman and Ranking Member to move on a bipartisan bill, and [voted](#) against a House bill (H.R. 4970) that did not adequately protect all victims. Bass is also 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 Bass' most recent [letter](#) is below:

August 15, 2012

*The Honorable John Boehner
Office of the Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515*

*The Honorable Eric Cantor
Office of the Majority Leader
H-329, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515*

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor:

I write to urge action on the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as soon as Congress returns in September. VAWA is instrumental in enabling law enforcement, medical professionals, and service providers to assist the victims of abuse and to hold their perpetrators accountable and it is imperative that the House and Senate resolve their differences and ensure there is bipartisan and bicameral agreement once again on this issue.

Having worked closely with groups like the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and the Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention in Keene, I have learned firsthand the significance of VAWA to the communities of the Granite State. Thousands of New Hampshire women depend on VAWA to keep their schools, homes, and workplaces safe. It is through VAWA programs that victims of abuse gain the support and assistance necessary to move forward with their lives.

While I was unable to support the original House bill due to my concerns that it did not go far enough in assisting all victims of violence, I still believe the House and Senate can come together and find a resolution, and reach a common-sense compromise that both chambers can support. Reauthorizing this important legislation should not and cannot be a partisan issue.

Thank you for your leadership and please let me know if I can be of assistance in this effort. I look forward to working with you to bring a bipartisan bill which upholds the continued successes of VAWA to the House floor as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Bass
Member of Congress