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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

October 23, 2018

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ranking Member Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara to urge action on legislation to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Thank you for holding a hearing on VAWA reauthorization on March 20 and for beginning the process of drafting legislation that continues to provide the resources needed for local law enforcement officials to combat domestic violence. VAWA funding has helped local prosecutors and other law enforcement officials improve services and protections for victims of crime and helped change the way that the criminal justice system responds to domestic violence.

As you heard from witnesses at the hearing earlier in the year, VAWA grants encourage communities to adopt unique approaches to entrenched problems and help ensure that all parts of the safety net for battered women are addressed. The County supports continuation of these programs to protect victims and hold abusers accountable, including:

- Domestic Violence Rapid Response Teams
- Domestic Assault Forensic Exams
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams
- High-Risk Domestic Violence Teams
- Trauma-Informed Training
- Education for children and teens

Thank you for the recent extension of VAWA until December 7 as part of the FY 2019 Defense and Labor-HHS-Education appropriations package. With the expiration of most VAWA grant authorizations at the end of this year, I urge you to expedite consideration of legislation to further reauthorize and expand these programs.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

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