

February 4, 2020

The Honorable {Legislator's full name}  
{Building / Street}  
Albany, NY {ZIP}

**Re: New York State Budget FY '20 – '21**

Dear {Assembly member/Senator + last name},

I am writing to you today as a/an {advocate, program director, executive director, etc.} at {your organization}.

New York State is in the process of transforming its system of funding and oversight of domestic violence programs. The system has not been updated since it was established more than 30 years ago. {Your organization}, domestic violence service providers across the State and the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) have been working collaboratively with Governor Cuomo, State Agency representatives and the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence to re-envision New York's domestic violence service delivery system.

**I urge you to support increases to critical funding in the budget so no one who is asking for shelter or other domestic violence services is ever turned away.**

In 2020, we have four budgetary priorities:

**1) Create the Strongest Statewide Network of Domestic Violence Services in the Country by Implementing a New Funding Structure for DV Programs**

The Governor has allocated \$5 million in the FY'20-'21 budget to pilot a new flexible funding model that reduces the barriers and challenges for domestic violence service providers assisting survivors. Transforming New York's antiquated domestic violence service delivery system is critical to ensuring victims and their families receive the support they need immediately and without conditions. The Governor's proposal is based on foundational work conducted by the DV Task Force and is a critical first step for the State to transition to an innovative, survivor-centered service delivery system.

**Request: Maintain the Governor's \$5 Million Allocation in the FY'20-'21 Aid to Localities Budget to Pilot an Innovative, Survivor-Centered Flexible Funding Model for DV Services**

**2) Increase Funding for Non-Residential DV Services**

**New York State has the highest demand for domestic violence services in the country.** According to the National Domestic Violence Counts Census, on one day in 2018 in New York State, 7,518 survivors of domestic violence were served. On that same day, there were 801 unmet requests for services, primarily due to a critical shortage of funds to assist victims. Non-

residential DV services, such as telephone hotlines, information and referral services, counseling, legal advocacy and financial empowerment, are essential for supporting the safety of survivors. Yet funding for non-residential DV services in the State Budget is at the same level it was 20 years ago when it was first proposed.

**Request: Increase Funding for Non-Residential Services for Domestic Violence Victims to \$6 Million**

### 3) Expand Supports for DV Victims by Enhancing Innovation within DV Agencies

Domestic violence is a serious, widespread public health issue. In fact, for every 20 New Yorkers, five women and three men will experience or have already experienced domestic violence.

The purpose of statewide domestic violence coalitions like NYSCADV is to provide education, support and technical assistance to domestic violence service providers to enable us to establish and maintain shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. Training topics include trauma-informed, victim-centered service provision and program development; information about laws and regulations and their impact on service provision; cultural competency; analysis of special considerations for historically marginalized communities; community collaboration; and housing options for survivors.

**Request: Provide \$150,000 in the State Budget to Support NYSCADV's Training and Technical Assistance for New York's DV Service Providers**

### 4) Implement Statewide Primary Prevention Programming

Primary prevention offers strategic solutions toward fostering healthy, thriving futures for families and communities – futures where domestic violence does not occur. Primary prevention programs create lasting change by re-setting the conditions in a community that allow domestic violence to thrive. Unfortunately, Governor Cuomo's FY'20-'21 Executive Budget does not allocate funding for primary prevention efforts.

**Request: Allocate \$4 Million to Support the Work of Domestic Violence Advocates and Launch Domestic Violence Prevention Initiatives Across New York State.**

If you would like more information, I can be reached at **{phone number}**, or you can contact Joan Gerhardt, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at NYSCADV, at 518-482-5465.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
**{Your name and title}**