



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 19, 2020

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT URGES REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST  
WOMEN ACT**

CHICAGO— Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today introduced a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which expired earlier this year. Joined by members of the City Council, Mayor Lightfoot implored Congress to act as these are common-sense reforms that lives depend on.

“It is absolutely incumbent upon us ensure that the countless residents impacted by domestic violence across our country have the critical federal support needed to protect themselves and their families,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Our highest responsibility as elected leaders is to protect the residents we serve, which is why I am proud to join my colleagues in City Council to implore lawmakers in Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act and strengthen its lifesaving services.”

In an effort to address domestic violence, the Violence Against Women Act (the Act) was passed with bipartisan support from Congress in 1994. The Act established the Office on Violence Against Women within the Department of Justice, and empowered that Office to provide a wide range of programs and services to address the epidemic of domestic violence, including community violence prevention programs, funding for victim assistance services like rape crisis centers and hotlines and legal aid for survivors of domestic violence.

“I stand with my fellow Members of the City Council to support the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act,” said 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Ald. Leslie Hairston, Chair of the Chicago Aldermanic Women’s Caucus. “We must do everything we can to serve and protect survivors of domestic violence.”

The Act’s passage has changed the landscape for victims who once suffered in silence and has helped the justice system come to understand that domestic violence in all of its forms are crimes that our society will not tolerate.

Despite the progress made under the Act, domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking remain a national public health issue, and this violence



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disproportionately impacts women, children, and LGBTQ+ individuals. On average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Locally, the Chicago Police Department receives an average of 431 calls related to domestic incidents per day. The trauma caused by these violent crimes often leads to severe mental, physical, and economic impact.

Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking do not discriminate, and anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic background, or gender can be a victim or perpetrator, therefore undermining safety and justice across all communities.

The Clerk and the City of Chicago will also submit a copy of the resolution to U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, as a sign of the City's commitment to this important issue.

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