

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3110

To ensure that victims of domestic violence get the help they need in a
single phone call

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 26 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 22), 2000

Mr. WELLSTONE (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BAYH, and Mr. KENNEDY)
introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To ensure that victims of domestic violence get the help
they need in a single phone call.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Domestic Vio-
5 lence Hotline Enhancement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) There are 2,000 domestic violence shelters
9 in the United States.

1 (2) The National Domestic Violence Hotline
2 has received close to 500,000 calls from victims of
3 domestic violence nationwide since 1996 and con-
4 tinues to receive 11,000 to 13,000 calls per month.

5 (3) Access to shelter that will address the spe-
6 cific needs of battered women and their children is
7 critical for women who are trying to escape violence.

8 (4) In Minnesota, the only State that has a
9 statewide, online network of domestic violence shel-
10 ters, being able to make a single phone call to access
11 the most appropriate shelter has led to significant
12 improvement for survivors and their families in re-
13 ceiving the most appropriate services for their
14 unique needs.

15 (5) Having an online network of shelters in
16 Minnesota has also allowed survivors and their chil-
17 dren to relocate to a broader number of areas in the
18 State so that they can be as safe as possible.

19 (6) Having an online network has also reduced
20 the number of calls women need to make to find
21 shelter.

22 (7) In Minnesota, 99 percent of women and
23 children are assured to receive the services they need
24 when they need them and where they need them in
25 a single call.

1 (8) The National Network to End Domestic Vi-
2 olence estimates that only 43 percent of domestic vi-
3 olence shelters in the United States have access to
4 the Internet.

5 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

6 The purposes of this Act are—

7 (1) to provide funds to a nonprofit organization
8 to develop a fully secure, continuously updated net-
9 work of available domestic violence shelters and serv-
10 ices around the United States, which shall be made
11 available to the National Domestic Violence Hotline
12 and member shelters nationwide to enable these pro-
13 grams to connect victims of domestic violence to the
14 most safe, appropriate, and convenient shelter while
15 the caller remains on the line; and

16 (2) to ensure that victims of domestic violence
17 get the help they need in a single phone call.

18 **SEC. 4. GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
20 Human Services (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-
21 retary”) shall award a grant to a nonprofit organization
22 to establish and operate an Internet website (referred to
23 in this Act as the “Website”), which—

1 (1) shall link, to the greatest extent possible,
2 the National Domestic Violence Hotline and every
3 domestic violence shelter in the United States;

4 (2) shall be highly secure;

5 (3) shall, to the maximum extent practicable,
6 contain continuously updated information as to
7 available services and space in domestic violence
8 shelters around the United States; and

9 (4) shall be made available to the National Do-
10 mestic Violence Hotline and domestic violence shel-
11 ters around the United States so the Hotline and
12 shelters will be able to connect victims of domestic
13 violence to the most safe, appropriate, and conven-
14 ient domestic violence shelter while the caller re-
15 mains on the line or in the most efficient way pos-
16 sible.

17 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a
18 grant under this section, a nonprofit organization shall
19 submit to the Secretary an application, which shall—

20 (1) demonstrate the experience of the applicant
21 in successfully developing and managing a tech-
22 nology-based network of domestic violence shelters;

23 (2) demonstrate a record of success of the ap-
24 plicant in meeting the specific shelter needs of vic-
25 tims of domestic violence and their families, as well

1 as the general needs of victims of domestic violence
2 and their families; and

3 (3) include a certification that the applicant
4 will—

5 (A) implement the highest level security
6 system to ensure the confidentiality of the
7 Website;

8 (B) have established the Website and,
9 within 5 years, have linked—

10 (i) the Hotline;

11 (ii) domestic violence shelters around
12 the United States; and

13 (iii) other domestic violence organiza-
14 tions that receive calls for shelter, such as
15 national and State domestic violence coali-
16 tions, that the grantee determines can
17 practically and safely be given access to
18 the Website;

19 (C) consult with the national, State, and
20 local domestic violence organizations in devel-
21 oping and implementing the site and providing
22 Internet connections; and

23 (D) otherwise comply with the require-
24 ments of this section.

1 (c) USE OF GRANT AWARD.—The recipient of a
2 grant award under this section shall—

3 (1) collaborate with the National Domestic Vio-
4 lence Hotline in developing and implementing the
5 network;

6 (2) ensure that the Website is continuously up-
7 dated;

8 (3) ensure that the Website provides informa-
9 tion describing the services each domestic violence
10 shelter can provide, such as services for individuals
11 with limited English proficiency, access to medical
12 care, social services, and other relevant services so
13 that Hotline callers and callers to shelters can re-
14 ceive the most appropriate placement for their indi-
15 vidual needs;

16 (4) ensure that the Website, to the maximum
17 extent practicable, provides up-to-the-minute infor-
18 mation on available bed space in shelters around the
19 United States;

20 (5) provide training to the staff of the Hotline
21 and to staff of shelters nationally regarding how to
22 use the Website to best meet the needs of callers;

23 (6) provide Internet access to the maximum ex-
24 tent practicable, to domestic violence shelters in the

1 United States that do not have the appropriate tech-
2 nology; and

3 (7) ensure that after the third year of the
4 project, the grantee will develop a plan to expand
5 the sources of funding for the Website to include
6 funding from public and private entities, although
7 nothing in this paragraph shall preclude a grantee
8 from raising funds from other sources at any time
9 during the 5-year grant period.

10 (d) DURATION OF GRANT.—The term of the grant
11 under this section be for 5 years. The grant may be re-
12 newed after 5 years for 1 or more additional 5-year peri-
13 ods.

14 (e) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall annually—

15 (1) conduct an evaluation of the grant program
16 under this section and the confidentiality of the
17 Website; and

18 (2) submit to Congress a report on the results
19 of that evaluation.

20 (f) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall monitor and
21 help ensure the security of the Website.

22 (g) WAIVER.—The Secretary will have discretion to
23 waive the 5-year time limit if the Secretary finds that
24 more time is necessary to complete the project.

1 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
3 priated to carry out this Act—

4 (1) \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2002; and

5 (2) such sums as may be necessary for each of
6 fiscal years 2003 through 2006.

7 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Of the amount made
8 available to carry out this Act in each fiscal year the Sec-
9 retary may use not more than 2 percent for administrative
10 costs associated with the grant program, of which 5 per-
11 cent shall be used to assist the National Domestic Violence
12 Hotline in participating in the establishment of the
13 Website.

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