



## Legislation Text

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Res. No. 978

Resolution calling upon Congress to pass, and the President to sign, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019.

By Council Members Louis, Rosenthal, Rivera, Chin, Kallos and Lander

Whereas, Despite the tireless and decades-long work of advocacy groups to halt the epidemic of domestic violence, sexual assault, and gender-based violence in the United States (U.S.), incidences of these acts are still shockingly high; and

Whereas, According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Prevention and Control, on average, more than 10 million women and men are physically abused by an intimate partner in the U.S. each year, which equates to nearly 20 people per minute; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Justice reports that one in three women and one in four men in the U.S. have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner, while one in four women and one in nine men experience severe intimate partner physical violence and/or intimate partner stalking, with impacts that include injury and post-traumatic stress disorder; and

Whereas, In New York City (NYC), the NYC Police Department responded to 250,447 domestic incident reports in 2018 alone, statistics indicate a rise in intimate partner-related incidents in NYC since 2017, and the number of domestic violence-related killings has continued to increase, while even NYC's murder rate has dropped; and

Whereas, The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), or Title IV of P.L. 103-322, was originally enacted in 1994 to address concerns about violent crime, and violence against women in particular, including allowing for enhanced sentencing of repeat federal sex offenders, mandated restitution to victims of specified

federal sex offenses, and authorized grants to state, local, and tribal law enforcement entities to investigate and prosecute violent crimes against women; and

Whereas, The fundamental goals of VAWA remain preventing violent crime, responding to the needs of crime victims, learning more about crime, and changing public attitudes through a collaborative effort by the criminal justice system, social service agencies, research organizations, schools, public health organizations, and private organizations, which the federal government tries to achieve primarily through grant programs that provide funding to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, nonprofit organizations and universities; and

Whereas, VAWA has been reauthorized three times since its original enactment in 1994, each time expanding and updating the law to meet the needs of victims, survivors, advocates, and other stakeholders.

Whereas, Most recently, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, P.L. 113-4, which reauthorized most VAWA programs through FY2018; and

Whereas, VAWA lapsed in 2019 after it was not extended by Congress; and

Whereas, On April 4, 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives (“House”) passed H.R.1585, or the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019, which would reauthorize the law and also include, among other things, protections for transgender people and a provision that would prohibit those convicted of certain misdemeanor charges from purchasing firearms; and

Whereas, As of June 2019, the U.S. Senate has yet to consider the law, despite the law passing the House with strong bipartisan support; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon Congress to pass, and the President to sign, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019

