VT Network Applauds Senator Leahy’s Amendment to Assist Immigrant Women Who Are Victims of Domestic Violence

Montpelier, VT – The VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence applauds the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee’s approval Monday of Senator Patrick Leahy’s amendment to assist immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence. The amendment was adopted as part of the committee’s consideration of immigration reform legislation.

The Leahy amendment will require the provision of work authorizations to victims within 180 days of filing their application. The amendment ensures that victims of domestic violence who have filed immigration applications can receive a temporary work authorization while their application is pending.

“We are so grateful for Senator Leahy’s leadership in protecting immigrant victims of violence,” said Sarah Kenney, associate director of public policy for the VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. “First in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and now in crafting comprehensive immigration reform, Senator Leahy and his colleagues are working to provide crucial protections to those who are most vulnerable to violence and exploitation.”

The ability to work is of primary importance to survivors of domestic violence. Abusers often use finances as a way to control their victims. Without a work authorization, it may be difficult for a victim to prove in court that she can provide for her family. It can also be difficult for a domestic violence victim to obtain housing outside of a domestic violence shelter (such as transitional housing or stable rental housing) without a work authorization.

This amendment assures that victims are able to provide for themselves and their families while awaiting the results of their immigration application.

The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence thanks Senator Patrick Leahy and his Senate colleagues for their continued commitment to women, children and men who are victims of domestic and sexual violence.
For more information about Senator Leahy’s amendment, go to

For more information about the Vermont Network call 802-223-1302 or go to our website at www.vtnetwork.org. See us on Facebook at VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

As the statewide leader to end domestic and sexual violence, the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, in collaboration with its member programs, is the collective voice for social change on behalf of domestic and sexual violence survivors in Vermont.

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