

TAKE ACTION – A FAITH RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY DAYS

In March 2011, hundreds of sisters and brothers from dozens of Christian communions and faith-based organizations gathered in Washington D.C. to be trained as advocates at Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). The goal of EAD, through worship, theological reflection and opportunities for learning and witness, is to strengthen our Christian voice and to mobilize for advocacy on a wide variety of U.S. domestic and international policy issues. More information: <http://advocacydays.org>



VAWA / IVAWA

Each year, EAD chooses a policy “ask” to share on lobby day and back home with government representatives. This year, the focus legislation was the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA).

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was the first federal legislation acknowledging domestic violence and sexual assault a crime. It also provides federal resources for community coordinated responses to violence against women. VAWA, originally passed in 1994, is up for reauthorization in the fall of 2011.

The International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA) would make stopping violence against women and girls a priority in United States diplomacy and foreign aid. The legislation would help end violence through prevention programs that educate women and girls, improve their economic opportunities, provide health interventions and support for survivors, and provide legal and judicial training aimed at holding abusers accountable.

More Information on VAWA and IVAWA:

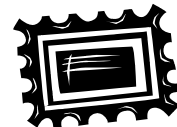
<http://advocacydays.org/lobby/lobbydayask-archive-2011.php>

TAKE ACTION!

- Find your member of congress
(This website can help! <https://writerep.house.gov/>)
- Write or email your representative, using this message to help shape your letter:

As a person of faith who believes that society and government has a divinely-mandated responsibility to care for the poor and protect the vulnerable, we urge members of Congress to recognize a moral obligation, in a time when more persons are suffering than ever before, to protect and strengthen the health, well-being, and security of women and families in 2011 and 2012 by:

- Voting to fully fund at or above FY2010 levels programs that serve families – especially those struggling to overcome poverty – domestically and around the world, and
- Voting to re-authorize and fully-fund the Violence Against Women Act and cosponsor the International Violence Against Women Act when it is re-introduced.



From: An Involved
Faithful Citizen
Every Community, USA

To: Congressional Representative
XXX Congressional Lane
Washington, DC USA

A Prayer for Peace for the Women of the World

O holy God, when we know about the pain and suffering of our sisters around the world who are beaten, trafficked, raped, abused and silenced, how can we be silent? How can we stand by the side and let this happen? Certainly, it cannot be in your name that such violence is done. You call us together as one, into community and caring for those most vulnerable.

When we pray for peace in the world, let us remember that many of our homes are not places where peace lives. Let us be the ones who create and sustain communities that provide support and safety for those who do not feel safe. Let us be the neighbors who reach out to women threatened by violence or violation. Let us be the ones who bring perpetrators into accountability.

We are all in need of your healing love and grace, O God. Help us remember that each one of us, female and male, has been created in your divine image. Help us re-member our broken bonds with each other with tenderness and love.

In the name of the Risen and ever-rising Christ, we pray. Amen.

OTHER IDEAS FOR ACTION:

- Pray for women who have experienced a violent attack or assault (1 in 3 women worldwide)
- Search your denomination's website to find out what resources are available on stopping *Violence Against Women*.
- Speak out against *Violence Against Women* – in your Bible Study, sermons, or minutes for mission.
- 2011 marks the end of the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence. Learn more and check out the resources available from the WCC at: <http://www.overcomingviolence.org/>



THESE ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALSO WORKING TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.

- Amnesty International – www.amnestyusa.org
- Break the Cycle – www.breakthecycle.org
- Faith Trust Institute – www.faithtrustinstitute.org
- Futures Without Violence – www.futureswithoutviolence.org
- International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) – www.icrw.org
- Jewish Women International – www.jwi.org
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence – www.ncadv.org
- National Network to End Domestic Violence – www.nnedv.org
- UN Women End Violence Against Women resource center – <http://www.endvawnow.org/>

This resource was created in response to what we learned at Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2011 by the *Justice for Women Working Group* (J4WWG) of the National Council of Churches, USA. Learn more about J4WWG here: <http://www.nccusa.org/womensministry> or contact Rev. Ann Tiemeyer, Program Director for Women's Ministries at atiemeyer@nccusa.org.

