



For Immediate Release:

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month; Advocates Applaud Governor, Legislature for Passing Victims' Rights Legislation

Sacramento, October 1, 2012 —Today marks the first day of Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM), and advocates across the state are commending the legislature and Governor Brown for their actions this session to support domestic violence victims and their families. During the last week, up to the deadline of September 30 to act on all pending bills, Governor Brown signed into law a number of bills related to domestic violence. These bills, along with those passed and signed into law earlier in the year, will strengthen existing protections and services for victims.

Tara Shabazz, executive director of the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, commended lawmakers for supporting the needs of victims.

“We thank Governor Brown and members of the legislature for championing so much important legislation to improve California’s response to domestic violence,” she said. “Their efforts this year will have a real impact on the lives of victims. These new laws show policymakers recognize that the safety of California families must come first.”

The bills signed into law by Governor Brown the past week include these crucial domestic violence victim protections:

- AB 593 and AB 1593 (Ma) give incarcerated domestic violence survivors a second chance in life. These bills will allow victims whose expert testimony was limited during their trial court proceedings to file for a writ of habeas corpus and provide victims a chance to effectively present their evidence during the parole process.

- AB 1522 (Atkins) closed an existing loophole through which victims of violent sexual felonies perpetrated by their spouses can be forced to pay spousal support and attorney's fees to their abusers.
- SB 1433 (Alquist) addresses the safety risks inherent for victims when firearms are present, by requiring judges to conduct a weapons check of firearms databases when issuing a protective order and by authorizing law enforcement, when serving a protective order, to take custody of any firearm in plain sight or located through a lawful search.
- SB 1403 (Yee) improves on current law, which allows victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking to terminate their leases with a limited obligation for paying rent, an essential protection for victims relocating for safety concerns.
- AB 1899 (Mitchell) adds T and U visa holders – immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking – to the list of individuals exempt from paying nonresident tuition, and extends eligibility for these students to apply for all publicly funded student financial aid programs.

DVAM is a national month of awareness and action dedicated to confronting and ending domestic violence in all its forms. California's advocates thank our state's lawmakers for the leadership they have shown on this issue, and pledge to continue to work closely with their elected representatives to protect public safety and increase victims' rights.

Related web sites:

Domestic Violence Awareness Month History: <http://www.nrcdv.org/dvam/DVAM-history>

DVAM Resources:

<http://www.ncadv.org/takeaction/DVAMResourcesandActivities.php>

About the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (the Partnership) is California's statewide domestic violence coalition, with organizational and individual members across the state. Working at the local, state and national levels for nearly 30 years, the Partnership has a long track record of successfully passing over 100 pieces of legislation on behalf of domestic violence victims and their children. The Partnership believes that by sharing expertise, advocates and legislators can end domestic violence. Every day we inspire, inform and connect all those concerned with this issue, because together we're stronger. With offices in Sacramento, the Partnership's member programs span the entire state.

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