

107TH CONGRESS
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To ensure that victims of domestic violence get the help they need in a single phone call, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 8, 2002

Mr. WELLSTONE (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DEWINE, and Mr. BAYH) 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, and for other purposes.

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 over 2,000 domestic violence shel-
9 ters in the United States.

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

5 (3) Access to shelters that address the specific
6 needs of domestic violence victims and their families
7 is critical for women who are trying to escape vio-
8 lence.

9 (4) In Minnesota, the only State with a state-
10 wide, online network of domestic violence shelters,
11 90 percent of domestic violence victims and their
12 families are assured of receiving the services they
13 need, when and where they need them, in a single
14 call.

15 (5) An online network of shelters would allow
16 victims and their families to relocate to a broader
17 number of areas within a State or in other States
18 so that they can be as safe as possible.

19 (6) An online network would reduce the number
20 of calls women need to make to find a domestic vio-
21 lence shelter.

22 (7) The National Network to End Domestic Vi-
23 olence estimates that only 43 percent of domestic vi-
24 olence shelters in the United States have access to
25 the Internet.

1 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

2 The purposes of this Act are as follows:

3 (1) To provide a grant to develop a fully secure,
4 continuously updated network of available domestic
5 violence shelters and services across the United
6 States. Such a network shall be made available to
7 the National Domestic Violence Hotline, shelters na-
8 tionwide, State and local domestic violence agencies,
9 and other domestic violence organizations, to enable
10 such entities to connect a victim of domestic violence
11 to the most safe, appropriate, and convenient shel-
12 ter, while the victim remains on the telephone line,
13 or in the most efficient way possible.

14 (2) To ensure that domestic violence victims get
15 the help they need in a single phone call.

16 **SEC. 4. GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**

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

24 (1) link, to the greatest extent possible, the Na-
25 tional Domestic Violence Hotline, every domestic vio-
26 lence shelter in the United States, State and local

1 domestic violence agencies, and other domestic vio-
2 lence organizations so that such entities will be able
3 to connect a victim of domestic violence to the most
4 safe, appropriate, and convenient domestic violence
5 shelter while the victim remains on the telephone
6 line or in the most efficient way possible;

7 (2) be highly secure; and

8 (3) contain continuously updated information as
9 to available services and space in domestic violence
10 shelters across the United States, to the maximum
11 extent practicable.

12 (b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a
13 grant under this section, a nonprofit organization shall
14 submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in
15 such manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
16 retary may require. The application shall—

17 (1) demonstrate the experience of the applicant
18 in successfully developing and managing a tech-
19 nology-based network of domestic violence shelters;

20 (2) demonstrate a record of success of the ap-
21 plicant in meeting the needs of domestic violence vic-
22 tims and their families; and

23 (3) include a certification that the applicant
24 will—

1 (A) implement the highest level security
2 system to ensure the confidentiality of the
3 Website;

4 (B) establish, within 5 years, a Website
5 that link the entities described in subsection
6 (a)(1);

7 (C) consult with the entities described in
8 subsection (a)(1) in developing and imple-
9 menting the Website and providing Internet
10 connections; and

11 (D) otherwise comply with the require-
12 ments of this section.

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

15 (1) collaborate with officials in the Department
16 of Health and Human Services in a manner deter-
17 mined appropriate by the Secretary;

18 (2) collaborate with the National Domestic Vio-
19 lence Hotline in developing and implementing the
20 network;

21 (3) ensure that the Website is continuously up-
22 dated;

23 (4) ensure that the Website provides informa-
24 tion describing the services of each domestic violence
25 shelter to which the Website is linked, including in-

1 information for individuals with limited English pro-
2 ficiency and information concerning access to med-
3 ical care, social services, transportation, services for
4 children, and other relevant services;

5 (5) ensure that the Website provides up-to-the-
6 minute information on available bed space in domes-
7 tic violence shelters across the United States, to the
8 maximum extent practicable;

9 (6) provide training to the staff of the Hotline
10 and to staff of the entities described in subsection
11 (a)(1) regarding how to use the Website to best
12 meet the needs of callers;

13 (7) provide Internet access to domestic violence
14 shelters in the United States that do not have the
15 appropriate technology for such access, to the max-
16 imum extent practicable; and

17 (8) ensure that after the third year of the
18 Website project, the recipient will develop a plan to
19 expand the sources of funding for the Website to in-
20 clude funding from public and private entities, al-
21 though nothing in this paragraph shall preclude a
22 grant recipient under this Act from raising funds
23 from other sources at any time during the 5-year
24 grant period.

1 (d) DURATION OF GRANT.—The term of a grant
2 awarded under this section shall be 5 years.

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

4 (1) conduct an evaluation of the grant program
5 carried out under this Act in a manner that shall be
6 designed to derive information on—

7 (A) the confidentiality of the website;

8 (B) the progress of the grantee in linking
9 the entities described in subsection (a)(1) to the
10 Network;

11 (C) the number of individuals served by
12 the website;

13 (D) any decreases in the number of phone
14 calls necessary to find shelter space for victims
15 of domestic violence; and

16 (E) other matters that the Secretary deter-
17 mines appropriate to ensure that the grantee is
18 achieving the purposes of this Act; and

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

21 (f) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall have access to
22 and monitor and help ensure the security of the Website.

23 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
25 priated to carry out this Act—

1 (1) \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2003; and

2 (2) such sums as may be necessary for each of
3 fiscal years 2004 through 2007.

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

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