

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1809

To provide grants for mental health and substance abuse services for women and children who have been victims of domestic or sexual violence.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 31, 2003

Mr. DASCHLE (for Mr. EDWARDS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To provide grants for mental health and substance abuse services for women and children who have been victims of domestic or sexual violence.

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 “Counseling in Shelters  
5 Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) Nearly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of American women report being  
2 physically or sexually abused by a husband or boy-  
3 friend at some point in their lives.

4           (2) Fifty-six percent of women who experience  
5 any partner violence are diagnosed with a psy-  
6 chiatric disorder. Twenty-nine percent of all women  
7 who attempt suicide were battered, 37 percent of  
8 battered women have symptoms of depression, 46  
9 percent have symptoms of anxiety disorder, and 45  
10 percent experience post-traumatic stress disorder.

11           (3) Children who witness domestic violence are  
12 more likely to exhibit behavioral and physical health  
13 problems including depression, anxiety, and violence  
14 toward peers. They are also more likely to attempt  
15 suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from  
16 home, engage in teenage prostitution, and commit  
17 sexual assault crimes.

18           (4) Each year, at least 6 percent of all preg-  
19 nant women, equal to about 240,000 pregnant  
20 women, are battered by the men in their lives.

21           (5) Complications of pregnancy, including low  
22 weight gain, anemia, and first and second trimester  
23 bleeding are significantly higher for abused women,  
24 as are maternal rates of depression, suicide at-  
25 tempts, tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use.

1           (6) A major domestic violence program in St.  
2           Petersburg, Florida, reports that 70 percent of the  
3           families that come to their shelter have substance  
4           abuse in their family—either the woman, her chil-  
5           dren, or her batterer. One study of a low-income  
6           Chicago neighborhood found that 42 percent of  
7           women experiencing severe abuse in the past 12  
8           months reported depression.

9 **SEC. 3. SHELTER GRANTS.**

10           (a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

11           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and  
12           Human Services (in this section referred to as the  
13           “Secretary”), acting through the Assistant Secretary  
14           for the Administration on Children, Youth, and  
15           Families, shall make grants to eligible entities for  
16           the purpose of providing on site mental health and  
17           substance abuse counseling and referral services.

18           (2) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19           (A) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible  
20           entity” means a public or nonprofit private do-  
21           mestic or sexual violence program or other com-  
22           munity-based entity including an Indian tribe  
23           or tribal organization that primarily serves vic-  
24           tims of domestic violence.

1                   (B) LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROFES-  
2                   SIONAL.—The term “licensed mental health  
3                   professional” includes a psychiatrist, psycholo-  
4                   gist, clinical social worker, licensed or certified  
5                   alcohol and drug addictions professional, or an  
6                   otherwise qualified individual who has appro-  
7                   priate training in the diagnosis or treatment of  
8                   mental health or substance abuse problems with  
9                   expertise in the dynamics of domestic or sexual  
10                  violence.

11                 (3) DURATION OF AWARDS.—The Secretary  
12                 shall award grants under this section for a period  
13                 not to exceed 5 years. Such grants may be renewed.

14                 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity awarded a grant pur-  
15                 suant to subsection (a) shall—

16                 (1) hire licensed mental health professionals to  
17                 provide on site mental health and substance abuse  
18                 counseling to women and children who have been  
19                 subjected to domestic or sexual violence;

20                 (2) hire dedicated staff qualified to coordinate  
21                 the mental health and substance abuse services for  
22                 victims of domestic and sexual violence and their  
23                 children including linking them with more com-  
24                 prehensive treatment programs in their local com-  
25                 munities; and

1           (3) provide training in the dynamics of domes-  
2           tic violence and sexual assault, including safety risk,  
3           potential lethality, and appropriate interventions, to  
4           those mental health and substance abuse profes-  
5           sionals hired to provide services to these women and  
6           their children.

7           (c) APPLICATION.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible entity that de-  
9           sires to receive a grant under this section shall sub-  
10          mit to the Secretary an application at such time, in  
11          such manner, and containing such information as  
12          the Secretary may require.

13          (2) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted  
14          pursuant to paragraph (1) shall contain a plan for  
15          the rigorous evaluation of the activities funded under  
16          this section, including process and outcome evalua-  
17          tion, and the submission of an evaluation at the end  
18          of the project period.

19          (d) GRANTMAKING CONSIDERATIONS.— The Sec-  
20          retary, in awarding grants under this section shall—

21                 (1) ensure that such grants are distributed eq-  
22                 uitably among the regions of the country and among  
23                 urban and rural areas; and

1           (2) give preference to applicants with strong  
2           ties to minority communities and those that dem-  
3           onstrate high levels of cultural competence.

4           (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, acting  
5           through the Assistant Secretary for the Administration on  
6           Children, Youth, and Families, shall provide technical as-  
7           sistance to grant recipients with respect to the implemen-  
8           tation of programs to provide on site mental health and  
9           substance abuse counseling and referral services.

10          (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
11          are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,  
12          such sums as may be necessary.

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