Contact - Senator Joni Ernst
DC Office Phone: (202) 224-3254
Cedar Rapids Office Phone: (319) 365-4504

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear Senator Ernst and Staff,

On August 21st Senator Ernst met with staff of the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) and pledged her support to sponsor the reauthorization of VAWA through a strong bipartisan Senate bill. I am writing regarding the recent news of a floor statement in which she reported that negotiations had broken down and characterized H.R.1585 as a partisan political statement and announced her intention to introduce her own proposal to reauthorize VAWA in the near future. I am urging the Senator to please keep the key components in mind regarding the safety and due process that survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, human trafficking, and stalking need. Often those affected by intimate partner violence live in fear without a voice - this is especially true for children -- This year alone nearly 3.3 million children will witness and live in fear within their own home in the United States. It is our job to ensure their safety and one of the ways to do that is by supporting VAWA and the organizations (like DVIP) that are funded by VAWA.

These key points are as follows:

- make important improvements in prevention programming and funding this work
- safeguard important protections that ensure all victims have access to safety and justice
- offer protections for survivors in federal, public, subsidized, and assisted housing and improve access to housing
- enhance the safety of tribal communities by removing barriers that prevent tribal governments from prosecuting crimes committed on tribal lands
- keep firearms out of the hands of adjudicated abusers and stalkers including closing the "boyfriend loophole". The need for due process to be honored on behalf of the victim intimate partner violence is of utmost safety concerns.
- improve support for survivors who need assistance in rebuilding financially
- address the needs of underserved communities
- improve the healthcare response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking with the help of advocates that work with survivors

I would love to chat with you directly about any of these points and learn more about what your plan is to ensure the safety and dignity of victim/survivors in Iowa.

Thank you so much for your time and assistance with this matter,
YOUR NAME HERE