

(WASHINGTON)--- □ Congressman Allen West (R-FL) released this statement today after voting Yes on H.R. 4970, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA):

"As a husband and father of two teenage daughters, protecting women from the dangers of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking is of utmost importance to me. The Violence Against Women Act authorizes more than \$680 million in funding per year to help prevent domestic violence and protect victims of abuse. This bill will increase resources for sexual assault investigations, prosecutions and victim services and bring those programs up to speed with the increasing victimization rate. The bill will dedicate a significant amount of funding to help speed up the DNA rape kit testing process, and clean up the backlog. VAWA also goes after the perpetrators with the harshest of punishments by strengthening penalties, including a mandatory 10-year penalty for forcible rape.

Sexual assault protection and prevention programs not only protect victims from the physical bruises, but from the emotional and mental scars as well. Preventing violence against women is not a Republican or Democrat issue. It is an American issue."

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