

Every year, 4.8 million women are the targets of intimate partner-related physical assaults and rapes. Less than twenty percent seek out medical attention following these attacks. This is why it is extremely important that we educate ourselves about the dangers of unreported incidences of domestic violence and ensure that all victims of these deplorable acts are aware of the resources available to them.

As Domestic Violence Awareness Month comes to a close, we must recommit ourselves to improving our system of victim detection, funding safe havens for survivors and their children, and educating our families and communities about the dangers of abusive relationships.

Domestic violence does not discriminate against age, education, race or religion. Every year millions of American women and men report incidents of domestic violence with a current or former partner. Sadly, young women between the ages of 16 to 24 bear the brunt of this abuse; and the most common cause of injury to women ages 15 to 44 is domestic violence.

In an effort to support all victims of abusive partners, I voted in favor of providing funding for Family Violence Prevention and Services in the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, including \$5.5 million in demonstration grants for community initiatives, \$127.78 million for battered women's shelters, and \$3.21 million for a national domestic violence hotline.

As we mark the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Violence Against Women Act, I am proud to be an ardent supporter of efforts aimed at eradicating violence against women. Domestic violence victims, regardless of gender or age should know their community stands with them, and against mental and physical abuse. As the month of October comes to a close, I hope you will join me in supporting the effort and goals of Domestic Violence Awareness Month throughout the year.

If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence, please call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1.800.799.SAFE (1.800.799.7233) or TTY 1.800.787.3224.