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**New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault Testimony before the
Assembly Budget Committee on the
Fiscal Year 2010 New Jersey State Budget**

On behalf of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault
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Dear Chairman Greenwald:

The New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault speaks for the countless survivors of sexual assault and their loved ones in New Jersey, and represents the 21 county-based sexual violence programs in New Jersey, plus the Sexual Assault Services and Crime Victim Assistance program at Rutgers University. The sexual violence programs in New Jersey provide a variety of services to survivors of sexual assault, including:

- 24-hour crisis response of a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate. A Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate is a specially trained advocate whose interactions with a client are protected by legal confidentiality.
- 24-hour hotline.
- Individual counseling for survivors and significant others as well as group counseling.
- Response to Sexual Assault Response Team activation (SART). These teams are made up of law enforcement officers, a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate that respond to survivors who need forensic exams.
- Legal, medical, and systems advocacy.
- Information and referral services.
- Community education and prevention work.

STATEWIDE SEXUAL VIOLENCE HOTLINE 1.800.601.7200

Our member programs operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year serving survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones. In 2006, our programs provided counseling to 3,245 survivors, answered calls from 11,878 survivors and 13,339 loved ones and accompanied 2,253 survivors to medical/ forensic exams, police investigations or court appearances.

According to the 2000 Department of Justice Violence Against Women survey, 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men reported experiencing a n attempted or completed rape at some time in their lives. When we include a broader definition of sexual violence, the estimate is that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will be the victim of a sexual violence. Sexual violence includes everything from a brutal rape (defined as sexual assault in NJ) to sexual harassment. All of these have profound effects on survivors, their loved ones, and the rest of New Jersey. Even if we take the more conservative rate of 1 in six women and 1 in 33, a moment in time snapshot of the New Jersey population shows that 881,967 of today's NJ citizens (754,545 women/girls, 127,422 men/boys based on 2007 population) will experience a rape or attempted rape in their lifetimes. Sexual violence programs are the only place survivors can turn to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Advocates answer the phone at all hours to listen to men and women talk about some of the most intimate and traumatic events of their lives. They get up in the middle of the night to meet survivors at hospitals and police stations, so that no survivor is forced to go through the experience alone. They counsel people who were assaulted twenty years ago and people who were assaulted twenty minutes ago. And for every survivor, family member, or friend who calls a sexual violence program, trained sexual violence advocates are there to listen, to help, and most importantly to believe.

In FY 2009, New Jersey provided \$1 million for sexual violence programs, divided up between the 21 county programs. For the FY 2010 the Governor is proposing a cut in this line.¹ Other funding comes from the federal government via Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP Formula funds, VAWA Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) funds that come through the Centers for Disease Control, and Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Grants (VAG). VAWA and VOCA funds have decreased or remained stagnant over the past few years and the sexual violence programs have had to compete with programs that serve other populations. In fact, because of the steep competition for funds, now no program may receive both VAWA Stop Formula and VOCA funds for the same project in one year, which has had a serious impact on many sexual violence programs and their ability to sustain an adequate level of services. Sexual violence programs collectively received less than \$1 million from VAWA STOP Formula and VOCA funds in 2008. The RPE funds are an additional \$1

¹ See Budget in Brief, Appendix I: Appropriations Major Increases and Decreases, p. 11.

million for the state. These funds are not meant to support direct services for survivors, but rather to promote awareness and eventually prevent sexual assault.

The only sure source of funding for sexual violence programs is the historically \$1 million line item through the Department of Community Affairs, which is divided up between the 21 county-based programs. For the FY 2010 the Governor has proposed a \$100,000 cut in this line for a total of \$900,000. This means an average of about \$43,000 per program – a \$5,000 cut per program from this fiscal year.

The \$5,000 may not seem like a lot, but to a sexual violence program that has to compete for nearly every dollar and that finances 24/7/365 services on a shoestring, this cut is significant. That amount does not even cover one full time staff person. In many counties, the bulk of the after-hours hotline work is done by a very committed group of volunteers, supervised by paid staff who also do counseling, training and educational programs, and who staff the hotline during the day. The funding that actually goes to the sexual violence programs is far below what the programs actually need. NJCASA estimates that to fund the most basic services of the state sexual violence programs in New Jersey would cost about \$218,279 per program. This would include paying for hotline staff, one full time caseworker, one part-time caseworker, one full time outreach and prevention worker and on-call staff.

Basic Services Per County Program

• 24-hour Hotline (365 x \$7.12x24) + 15% fringe	=	\$72,029
• 1 Full-time Caseworker @ \$45,000 + 25% fringe	=	\$56,250
• 1 Half-time Caseworker @ \$25,000 + 15% fringe	=	\$28,750
• 1 Full-time Outreach worker @ \$35,000 + 25% fringe	=	\$43,750
• <u>On-call advocates</u>	=	<u>\$17,500</u>
	Total =	\$218,279

Sexual violence programs are funded at far less than \$218,279 per year through federal and state money. At best, our programs receive about \$136,895 per year in federal and state funds.

Best case funding scenario

• CDC Rape Prevention	=	\$38,845
• State line item	=	\$43,000
• <u>VOA funds (VAWA STOP formula cap is \$45,000)</u>	=	<u>\$55,000</u>
	Total =	\$136,845

Because federal sources of funds are drying up and the sources that are left are unpredictable, programs have had to let go of staff and cut back on services. In Cumberland county, the program is in jeopardy after the death of the program director and the realization of the hosting agency that the program had lost funding from other sources. The instability of funding means that programs don't always know how long they can continue to work with survivors as they may have to lay off staff if the next grant cycle doesn't go well. Nearly every before grant awards are made, NJCASA receives calls from its members wondering whether they need to close out their client case-loads because they are not sure of where they funding will come from to sustain their services.

In the long run, funds not spent now will be spent later. Sexual violence costs New Jersey money and the less support survivors receive, the more trouble they have later. Sexual violence is thought to be one of the most costly crimes. The National Institute of Justice reports that one incident of adult sexual assault costs \$87,000 to its survivor: \$5,100 in tangible expenses and \$81,400 in intangible (quality of life) costs. For child sexual abuse, the full cost to its victim per incident is \$99,000, \$9,500 of which is in tangible costs.² Sexual assault survivors are more likely to smoke, use alcohol, and are more likely to have a number of illnesses such as gastrointestinal issues or back pain.

Economic cost to businesses and society is also significant. In a 1996 study in Michigan the larger economic impact of sexual assault was calculated at \$6.5 billion, or \$700 per resident.³ Scaled for New Jersey the economic loss would be \$5.59 billion (based on 86% of Michigan's population). Providing support and funding prevention efforts help minimize those costs to survivors and to New Jersey.

NJCASA and its sexual violence program members are part of the social safety net. The vast majority of sexual assault cases never get to the police or the prosecutor. In many cases, the advocate on one end of the phone is the first person to even hear the words "I was raped" by the survivor on the other end of the line. For many survivors, the support that our programs are able to give them -- through counseling, information and advocacy -- is what allows survivors to be able to make a report to the police and go through the criminal justice process. For others, our support helps them just get through their day. We are part of the safety net through our counseling and support for survivors who don't know where else to turn. But our part of the safety net is close to fraying as our programs' sources of funding dwindle and disappear.

As the numbers above show, there is already a funding gap of at least \$1.71 million for the provision of effective services to survivors of sexual violence. The item for Rape

² Miller, Ted R, et al. *Victim Cost and Consequences: A New Look*. National Institute of Justice. 1996.

³ Post, LA et al. "The rape tax: tangible and intangible costs of sexual violence." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2000.



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Prevention under the Department of Community Affairs in the FY 2010 budget needs to be maintained at least at the previous level of support of \$1 million for survivors of sexual violence.