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April 3, 2019

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than three million members of the National Education Association and 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE YES on the bipartisan Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019 (H.R. 1585). Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

Enacted in 1994, the original Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was a historic recognition on the part of the federal government that domestic violence devastates victims and degrades our society. H.R.1585 would maintain protections for victims, make vital investments in preventing sexual assaults, protect victims of domestic violence from intimate partner homicide, and increase victims' access to safe housing and economic stability. In addition, H.R. 1585 would strengthen VAWA by closing the "boyfriend loophole" and barring people convicted of abusing, stalking or assaulting a dating partner from purchasing or owning a firearm; this provision would also apply to people under a court-issued restraining order.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's [2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey \(NISVS\)](#) found that more than 1 in 3 women and nearly 1 in 4 men have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact, and that nearly 1 in 5 women have experienced completed or attempted rape. The [Congressional Research Service](#) reports that since VAWA's enactment, the rate of serious intimate partner violence has declined by 70 percent for women and 87 percent for men.

We urge to VOTE YES on H.R. 1585 when it comes to the floor.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association