

Sample Letter to North Carolina State Assembly Senator/Representative

Legislator Name and address

Date

Dear Senator (Representative) _____,

As a constituent of your district, I am writing to request your support for programs to reduce domestic violence and provide much-needed services to survivors in our community. The third week of October has been designated as a *Week Without Violence (WWV)* to raise awareness and promote positive action to end gender-based violence.

Although the global WWV campaign has been active for twenty-five years, domestic violence continues to be a serious issue in North Carolina, and funding for services has not kept pace with the growing demand. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 35.2% of North Carolina women and 30.3% of North Carolina men experience intimate partner physical violence, sexual violence, and or stalking in their lifetimes.

I request your support to increase state funding for domestic violence programs to help avoid program cuts and reduced capacity in the wake of continued federal funding cuts. These critical, life-saving programs provide emergency shelter, temporary housing, counseling, and other life-saving services for survivors of domestic violence. Without increased funding, victims may be faced with no escape from their abusive situations.

In addition, we need common-sense gun safety legislation to address the growing use of firearms in domestic violence offenses. In North Carolina in 2020, there were 91 intimate partner homicides. Between 2010 and 2016, North Carolina had 745 domestic violence-related homicides. These statistics are simply unacceptable.

North Carolina already requires a background check before the purchase of a handgun (via a permit to purchase or a concealed weapons license). However, North Carolina should strengthen its laws to protect victims and survivors by:

- Prohibiting domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking misdemeanants from possessing firearms;
- Prohibiting respondents to ex parte, temporary and final protective orders, including all dating partners, from possessing firearms;

- Requiring all persons prohibited due to domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking to surrender their firearms;
- Requiring law enforcement to confiscate firearms when responding to domestic violence incidents at the request of the survivor; and
- Requiring background checks for all firearm sales and transfers.

Increased funding for domestic violence services and common-sense gun regulations are crucial to North Carolina's commitment to making our communities safe for women and girls to thrive. I hope that I can count on your support for this life-saving legislation to improve our state's response to domestic violence.

Sincerely,

Name

Address