



Advocacy Update

Sent November 14, 2012

Fighting Domestic Violence

Last week, WRJ signed onto a very important letter addressed to congressional leaders Harry Reid, Mitch McConnell, John Boehner and Nancy Pelosi. As Congress comes back this week for the brief lame duck session, these leaders will be deciding the agenda for the rest of the year. In its letter, WRJ stressed the great importance of making sure that the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which is already overdue for reauthorization, is voted on.

Fighting domestic violence has been a priority for WRJ for many years. We've written about it on our blog, we've passed policy on the issue, and we've worked with crucial partners to raise awareness. This letter was just the latest step in a serious and ongoing series of efforts to end violence against women, both in our home communities and across the world.

Protecting Key Programs in Deficit Reduction

When Congress was unable last year to agree on a long-term deficit reduction program, it triggered a process known as "sequestration." Sequestration is scheduled to begin in January 2013 and will include \$1.2 trillion in automatic, across-the-board federal spending cuts through 2021. Among the areas that will be impacted by these cuts are Medicare, low-income housing programs, education and more. In addition to these sequestration spending cuts, tax credits for low- and moderate-income families and federal emergency unemployment insurance benefits are scheduled to expire at the same time, along with tax cuts passed during the Bush era. Together, these developments will have a major impact on the economy, particularly threatening the well-being of Americans in need who rely on federal safety net programs to stay afloat.

Sequestration will affect a host of issues that WRJ cares about and has fought vehemently for over the years, from health care to economic justice to foreign aid. [Click here to make your voice heard](#), and to urge Congress to use a balanced approach to deficit reduction that will not destroy the safety net of programs serving the most vulnerable.

Canadian MP on Jewish Refugees

The Canadian parliament last week heard a motion about Jewish refugees proposed by MP and former justice minister Irwin Cotler. The proposal seeks formal government recognition of 850,000 Jews "forcibly displaced and exiled from Arab countries since the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948." This proposal compliments a broader effort led by Israel's Foreign Ministry to bring more international attention and recognition to situation of the Jews who fled the Arab states due to state-sponsored persecution after Israel was declared independent.

WRJ has, throughout its history, been a constant voice of support and affirmation for the rights of Jews worldwide and Israel's security and well-being. WRJ continues to advocate for a two-state solution as a way to establish lasting peace in the Middle East while maintaining a strong Jewish state with peaceful and secure borders.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home