

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

PROCLAMATION NO. 2015-017

Proclaiming March 12, 2015 Commemoration Day of the 20th Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act in Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women." Violence against women takes many forms, including but not limited to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and children's exposure to violence. Such violence can result not only in physical injury, but also mental, sexual, reproductive health and other health problems, including increased risk for HIV.
- b. It is estimated by the United States Department of Justice that in the United States a woman is assaulted every 15 seconds, with domestic violence being the leading cause of injury to women. Amnesty International estimates that one in three women will experience some form of violence in their lifetime. In many of these cases, children are present and victimized by witnessing violence or being the target of violence themselves.
- c. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), originally passed in 1994, was renewed again in 2013. The Act is a key piece of federal legislation that closed critical gaps in service and justice and has saved lives in the process. Since the original passage of VAWA, there has been a significant increase in reporting: 51% increase by women, and 37% increase by men. This increased awareness has led to a decrease in the number of women killed by an intimate partner by 34%, and a decrease in non-fatal intimate partner violence by 67%. The number of men killed has also decreased by 57%. These decreases in fatalities demonstrate that the benefits of the law are community-wide.
- d. Multnomah County further recognizes the efforts the County and its community partners who have shown strong leadership and collaboration to address all forms of violence against women. In Fiscal Year 2014, Multnomah County-funded domestic violence programs were able to reach 5,531 survivors and their children.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

1. March 12, 2015 as a Commemoration Day in Multnomah County, Oregon, for the 20th Anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act.
2. We urge all Multnomah County residents to stand against all forms of violence towards women by remaining diligent and aware in their respective communities, supporting victims, holding perpetrators accountable through reporting, and promoting and encouraging healthy and respectful relationships.

ADOPTED this 12th day of March, 2015.



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**



Deborah Kafoury, Chair

SUBMITTED BY: Commissioner Loretta Smith, District 2