

Eliminate Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grants

SAVINGS IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016-2020	2016-2025
\$428	\$437	\$447	\$457	\$467	\$447	\$489	\$501	\$514	\$527	\$2,236	\$4,714

Heritage Recommendation:

Eliminate Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grants. This proposal saves \$428 million in 2016, and \$4.7 billion over 10 years.

Rationale:

VAWA grants should be terminated, because these services should be funded locally. Using federal agencies to fund the routine operations of domestic violence programs that state and local governments could provide is a misuse of federal resources and a distraction from concerns that are truly the province of the federal government.

The principal reasons for the existence of the VAWA programs are to mitigate, reduce, or prevent the effects and occurrence of domestic violence. Despite being created in 1994, grant programs under the VAWA have not undergone nationally representative, scientifically rigorous experimental evaluations of effectiveness.

The Government Accountability Office concluded that previous evaluations of the VAWA programs “demonstrated a variety of methodological limitations, raising concerns as to whether the evaluations will produce definitive results.” Further, the evaluations were not representative of the types of programs funded nationally by the VAWA. In addition to The Heritage Foundation and GAO, others have noted that there is virtually no evidence that the VAWA programs are effective.

Additional Reading:

- David B. Muhlhausen and Christina Villegas, “Violence Against Women Act: Reauthorization Fundamentally Flawed,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2673, March 29, 2012, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2012/03/the-violence-against-women-act-reauthorization-fundamentally-flawed/>.
- Paul J. Larkin, Jr., “Send in the Lawyers: The House Passes the Senate’s Violence Against Women Act,” The Daily Signal, March 1, 2013, <http://dailysignal.com/2013/03/01/send-in-the-lawyers-the-house-passes-the-senates-violence-against-women-act/>.
- David B. Muhlhausen, “Violence Against Women Act Gives Grant Money to Misleading Organizations,” The Daily Signal, February 13, 2013, <http://dailysignal.com/2013/02/13/front-group-for-vawa-funded-organizations-gets-the-facts-wrong/>.
- U.S. General Accounting Office, “Justice Impact Evaluations: One Byrne Evaluation was Rigorous; All Reviewed Violence Against Women Office Evaluations Were Problematic,” March 2002, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/240/233527.pdf>.

Calculations:

Savings are expressed as budget authority as reported on page 231 of “Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015, Table 29-1. Federal Programs by Agency and Account,” http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2015/assets/29_1.pdf. Budget authority is not provided for 2025, but is assumed to increase at the same rate as the geometric mean of the previous nine years.