

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: Domestic violence advocates appalled by President Trump's support for abusers, dismayed by his budget priorities

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Madison — Coming on the heels of unambiguous statements of support for multiple domestic batterers, Wisconsin advocates for victims of domestic violence are voicing strong opposition to President Trump's newly introduced 2019 budget proposal that includes dramatic cuts to critical services for victims like the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). Programs such as the LSC, the single largest provider of legal aid for low income Americans, exist to serve struggling families, disabled citizens and other vulnerable individuals like survivors of violence.

“President Trump's recent statements unequivocally supporting domestic abusers in his administration is yet another example of his disturbing history of violence against women both personally and politically,” said Patti Seger, Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. “Even by the standards of this administration, openly supporting multiple abusive staff members as their former victims courageously disclose their history of violence is as disgusting as it is shocking. 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives, and it is truly a sad day for those of us involved in the movement to end domestic violence when the President of the United States not only threatens victims' safety through the budgetary powers of his office, but actively supports the very abusers that are

controlling and harming them in every community across the country.”

The Trump administration has been widely criticized in recent days for statements made by both the President and his Chief of Staff John Kelly in the wake of reporting that White House staff secretary Rob Porter and David Sorensen, a member of the Trump administration’s speechwriting team, both have a history of domestic abuse against former spouses. Compounding the shocking affirmative statements of support for the accused batterers, it was then uncovered that the White House was made aware of the accusations against Rob Porter before his hiring and that they had in fact contributed to a delay in granting him a permanent security clearance.

“The first step in combatting domestic violence is listening to victims and believing them. President Trump’s statements show yet again that he not only does not prioritize victim safety, but is in fact contributing to the trauma they face every day,” continued Seger. “We are calling on President Trump to apologize to all victims of domestic violence and educate himself on the cycle of control that abusers like Rob Porter and David Sorenson inflict on their victims. Maybe if he listened to the voices of survivors he wouldn’t be so quick to slash the services they rely on when escaping violence.”

President Trump’s budget proposal, which would make large cuts to funds established in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and fully eliminate the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), was introduced just days after his public statements of support for the two recently-resigned domestic abusers in his administration.