



October 16, 2007

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, and Science  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
144 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, and Science  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
123 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

On behalf of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) which works with the 50 state sexual assault coalitions, as well as victims and survivors of sexual assault, we write today in opposition to the Vitter amendment, number 3277 to the fiscal year 2008 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill. We oppose requiring communities funded by the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office to inquire about people's immigration status when they report crimes. If enacted, this amendment would undercut community policing and put victims of sexual assault at further risk.

As strong advocates for victims of sexual assault, you both know that sexual assault is already one of the most under-reported crimes with only 36% of rape and sexual assault victims reporting the crime to the police. (BJS, *National Crime Victimization Survey*, 2005). As a result, NAESV absolutely opposes this measure which will create additional barriers to victims coming forward. Victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and dating violence need to trust the police to seek assistance. In addition, we are learning more and more that sex offenders are serial predators--therefore, it serves the needs of the entire community when sexual assault victims come forward to help put an offender behind bars.

Scores of cities and states have community policing policies that encourage all residents to work with the police and report crimes. Any legislation that ends trust and causes victims of sexual assault – or any portion of the population for that matter - to fear the police exposes victims to even greater peril.

For these reasons, we urge you and your colleagues to vote NO on this harmful amendment.

Sincerely,

Monika Johnson Hostler  
President