

STOP SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION OPPOSITION TO AB 2051 COHN: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Current Law: Unbelievably state law (H&S Code 124250) defines domestic violence victims as only *female, woman or women* in Health & Safety Code 124250. This means a full range of services - e.g. shelter, counseling and legal assistance are exclusively offered only to all women including Lesbian, Bisexual and their children.

AB 2051: Extends services to “lesbian gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)” victims. Additionally it makes the provision for the appointment of a representative for the LGBT community to the Domestic Violence Advisory Council. AB 2051 does not make the same provision too include heterosexual males.

Stop California’s Discrimination Against Men and Their Children

Why are children of male victims of domestic violence less worthy of protection?

Current Law and AB 2051 – discriminates against half the state’s population, male victims and their children. Males actually represent 36% - 50% of all domestic violence victims, depending on the survey and data. Here is the Center for Disease Control (CDC) data: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm> . (Also see Family Violence Fact Sheet pages 12 and 13)

The most recent report from the National Violence Against Women Survey found:

- The number of straight male victims in the general population is 14 times the number of gay, lesbian and transgender victims combined,
- There are 3 times more straight male victims of color (African-American, Asian, Latino, Native American) than all gay, lesbian and transgender individuals.

California Violates Federal Law – Congress just changed the Violence Against Woman’s Act to make it gender neutral. California is now a national embarrassment and bastion of discrimination. What would happen if a domestic violence victim was defined in state law as exclusively “male”? A class action lawsuit, Megan Black vs. California was filed in October 2006. The author was aware of the lawsuit before AB 2051 was introduced. (*See page 14*)

From the Contra Costa Times, 5/08/2006: “There could be a legal need as well. Herma Hill Kay, a Boalt Hall law professor who specializes in anti-discrimination law, said federal court decisions and state law suggest that excluding male victims from funding may violate the law”. (*See pages 15, 16, and 17*)

OPPOSITION –

AB 2051 IS OPPOSED BY A BROAD COALITION OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED EXPERTS, RESEARCHERS, AND TREATMENT PROVIDERS. (*See attached list, page 2*)

National and International Experts Oppose AB 2051

See attached letters by internationally respected experts, researchers, book authors and treatment providers. Here are just a few.

- Tonia Nicholls Ph.D.: Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission, BC and Primrose Project for Violent Women, UK. Tonia has also published 25 peer reviews and presented over 70 scholarly presentations internationally on violent behavior and domestic violence. (*See letter page 3*)
- Denise Hines: University of Massachusetts Lowell (Department of Criminal Justice) and Research Associate at the Family Research Laboratory and Crimes Against Children Research Center (University of New Hampshire). Denise has authored 2 books and several Journals on the subject. Denise spoke to the US Senate Committee on the renewal of the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) 2005, which was amended and signed into law to be gender neutral and included male victims. (*See letter pages 4 and 5*)
- John Hamel LCSW: John Hamel and Associates and also Family Violence Treatment and Education Association (FAVTEA). John is an internationally respected researcher and California batterer intervention provider. John is the author of *Gender Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse* (Springer, 2005). (*See letters pages 6, 7, 8 and 9*). *Also see John's 2 page email to the San Francisco Chronicle, pages 10 and 11.*

Also see additional opposition letters from: (see pages 18 through 29)

- Jan Brown: Founder of The Domestic Abuse Help Line for Men and Women
- Dr. Martin Feibert: Domestic Violence researcher and Prof. At UC Long Beach
- Gene Arnovitz : Domestic Violence/Anger Management Facilitator in Marin and Alameda counties
- Sarah Desmarais, MA: Simon Fraser University, BC
- Dr. Laura Patracek: Author of Anger Workbook for Women and treatment expert.
- Richard Davis: Founder of Family Non Violence
- Jackie Ray & Brandy Hunter: Grant Joint Union High School District Adult Education
- William Flagg: Life Change Counseling (DV treatment) and former Probation Officer
- Thomas W. Chapman: Peace Creations (DV treatment)
- Phil Cook: Stop Abuse For Everyone (SAFE)



APR 24 2006

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April 23, 2006

RE: AB 2051 - Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

POSITION: I oppose this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits be available to *all victims*, with express language to include heterosexual male victims.

Dear Assembly Member:

I am contacting you to share my grave concerns about the Cohn Domestic Violence Bill. I strongly oppose this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits are made available to heterosexual male victims. I have a commitment to this issue based in large part on my research and scholarly activities that have served to inform my understanding of women's aggression and the dynamics of interpersonal aggression, specifically abuse in intimate relationships. I am the Senior Research Fellow at the Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission, BC Mental Health and Addictions Institute in British Columbia, Canada. I have a Ph.D. in psychology and a specialization in law and forensic psychology. My areas of expertise include abuse in intimate relationships, women in conflict with the law, violence risk assessment and risk management, psychopathy, and mental disorder and violence. I have published ~25 peer reviewed articles, book chapters, and books, including three violence risk assessment and prevention manuals. Of possible particular relevance to the Cohn Domestic Violence Bill, I recently co-edited a comprehensive book on gender-inclusive research and interventions in domestic violence. I am a consultant to the Correctional Service of Canada for the development of a gender-specific violence risk assessment instrument and the Home Office, UK for the Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder (DSPD)-Primrose Project for violent women. I have prepared three reports for the Correctional Service of Canada on the mental health needs of female offenders. I regularly present peer reviewed and invited addresses locally, nationally, and internationally, totally >70 scholarly presentations, in total.

My recommendations for revising the language in the Bill reflect several issues:

- 1) Heterosexual male victims comprise a very large proportion of DV victims, ~ 30%-40% of individuals who suffer a DV related physical injury.
- 2) When male victims who have children are denied services, their children are also denied services.
- 3) The law refers to "*Equality in Prevention and Services*" but, in fact, it is blatantly discriminatory. Services should be available to all victims, regardless gender or sexual orientation.
- 4) One of the best predictors of wife abuse victimization is female perpetrated aggression. Providing services to all victims (and all perpetrators) is the most effective means of protecting women, men, and children.
- 5) Female perpetrated domestic violence appears to have a particularly negative impact on children.

I sincerely believe that gender-inclusive interventions with families in turmoil will reduce the risks associated with domestic violence, promote healthy families (most abuse victims want the abuse to stop, not to end the relationship), and nipping the intergenerational transmission of aggression in the bud.

Sincerely,

Tonia L. Nicholls, Ph.D.

AB 2051
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APR 24 2006

April 24, 2006

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DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Re: AB 2051 – Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

Position: I oppose this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits be available to all victims, with express language to include heterosexual males.

Dear Assembly Member:

My name is Denise A. Hines, Ph.D.. I am a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and a Research Associate at the Family Research Laboratory and Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire. I am an expert in the field of domestic violence – I have written two books on the topic and several scientific journal articles and book chapters, and I have presented my research at various conferences across the nation. In addition, I spoke to the Executive Branch and the Senate Judiciary Committee as an expert in domestic violence during the proceedings for the renewal of the federal Violence Against Women Act.

Recently, it was brought to my attention that a domestic violence bill has been introduced in the California State Legislature by assembly member, Rebecca Cohn. This bill expands existing services for domestic violence victims to include gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender victims of domestic violence. However, the bill does not include male heterosexual victims. As I understand, the original bill intended to help all victims of domestic violence, but has recently been changed so that only female and gay or lesbian victims will be protected by it.

I urge you to change the wording of this bill back to its original intention: to serve all victims of domestic violence. Thirty years of research clearly show that heterosexual males comprise a significant proportion of domestic violence victims. For example, if we consider a victim to be someone who sustains an injury due to domestic violence, the National Violence Against Women Survey showed that males make up 40% of all victims. They comprise 27% of injuries that require medical attention, and 38% of victims who lose time from work. Other major surveys consistently show that in approximately 25% of domestically violent heterosexual relationships, only the female is violent, and in 50% of domestically violent heterosexual relationships, both the male and female are violent towards each other. Clearly, heterosexual men are victims of domestic violence, and they deserve access to domestic violence services. However, heterosexual men who have attempted to access such services continually report being turned away, and staff members usually state that they do not help men. In addition, countless male victims have been referred to batterers' programs when there was clear evidence that the woman was the batterer. We need to stop this blatant discrimination and create gender-neutral domestic violence legislation.

A second issue to consider is that when men with children try to access domestic violence services and are turned away, we deny their children services and put them in danger. There is an unknown quantity of children in California who cannot find the services they need to escape their violent mothers, and therefore, they must remain in their homes. Thus, by discriminating against male heterosexual victims of domestic violence, we are also discriminating against their children and putting both the father and his children at risk. It is imperative, then, to assure that this bill includes heterosexual men as victims.

Please contact me if you would like any additional information on domestic violence. I am happy to discuss any of these issues, and would like to see California enact a non-discriminatory domestic violence bill.

Sincerely,

Denise Hines
Denise A. Hines
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JOHN HAMEL & ASSOCIATES

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March 4, 2006

Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn
State Capital, Room 3160
Sacramento, CA 94249-0024

RE: AB 2051 – Cohn * Domestic Violence

POSITION: I oppose unless amended to assure that benefits be available to all victims, with express language to include heterosexual male and female victims.

Dear Assemblywoman Cohn:

I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a specialist in the field of family violence, with offices in Pleasant Hill and Greenbrae. I am also a Batterer Intervention Provider, court-certified in three San Francisco Bay Area counties. Since 1992, I have facilitated and/or supervised groups for male and for female perpetrators. I have also worked extensively with violent couples, have provided supportive counseling to male and female victims of partner abuse, and have conducted numerous family violence assessments on behalf of the Family Court in Contra Costa County. I provide training on domestic violence to mental health professionals, victim advocates and law enforcement, and am the author of *Gender-Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse* (Springer Publishing, 2005), as well as the co-editor of a new book, *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence: A Handbook of Gender-Inclusive Theory and Treatment* (Springer, Summer, 2006). Based upon my extensive clinical experience, as well an exhaustive review of the research literature, I believe that domestic violence is a human and family problem, and not simply one of men battering women. Accordingly, your bill ought to reflect the realities of family violence. Below is an up-to-date summary of the research on domestic violence. The references are available upon request. Should you wish to obtain more information, please visit the “research” pages of my website, www.JohnHamel.net, or the website of the Family Violence Treatment and Education Association (www.FAVTEA.com).

1. Assault rates and impact. In intimate partner relationships, men and women assault one another at approximately equal rates (Archer, 2000; Straus & Gelles, 1990). Of course, because the man in any given relationship is typically the stronger partner, the woman is more likely to suffer physical injuries. Indeed, a recent large-scale international study (Straus, 2004) found that women incur about 60% of domestic violence related injuries; while a comprehensive, meta-analytical review of the research literature (Archer, 2000) fixed the rate at approximately 64%. Also, compared to men, women evidence higher levels of psychological symptoms and stress-related issues as a result of being physically assaulted (Anderson, 2002; Straus & Gelles, 1990; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). However, the overall effects of both *physical and emotional abuse* on men and women are comparable (Pimlott-Kubiak & Cortina, 2003; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994).

2. Self-defense. Women are the victims in 75% of intimate partner homicides (Rennison, 2002), and when women kill their male partners, they are four times more likely than male intimate murderers to have previously been battered by their spouse (Felson & Messner, 1998). However, the numbers of female intimate murders who act purely in self-defense account for only 10% of the total. Overall, self-defense is a motive for intimate partner assaults in only about 10% to 20% of cases, and this holds for both men and women (Carrado et al., 1996; Follingstad, 1991; Sommer, 1994).) In fact, women initiate partner violence at rates similar to, or higher than men (Straus, 1993).

3. Limitations of patriarchy explanation. Contrary to what is commonly believed by victim advocates, patriarchy, while certainly relevant in many cases, does not account for the majority of partner abuse. First, a large majority of relationships are equalitarian (Coleman & Straus, 1990), and most men are neither physically abusive nor highly controlling (Dutton, 1994). Second, lesbians engage in high rates of abuse, including physical assaults (West, 1998). Third, violent men have been found to possess less, not more traditional masculine characteristics (Neidig et al., 1986; Sugarman & Frankel, 1996). Fourth, there are few if any differences in sex-role inequality between abusive and non-abusive couples (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). Fifth, structural power does not necessarily translate to individual power (Felson, 2002). And lastly, societal norms support female-perpetrated abuse in the home (Straus et al., 1997; Straus, 1999.) The actual causes, or risk factors, for partner abuse are varied, but similar across genders, and include: low socioeconomic status, high levels of stress, under 30 years of age, past childhood abuse, having pro-violent attitudes, personality disturbance and substance abuse (Anderson, 2002; Babcock et al., 2003; Conradi, 2004; Dutton, 1998; Follingstad et al., 1991; Henning et al., 2003; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnston & Campbell, 1993; Magdol et al., 1997; Morse, 1995; Simmons et al., 2004; Sommer, 1994; Stacey et al., 1994; Straus et al., 1990). In most cases, the abuse is mutual, and involves dysfunctional relationship dynamics (Babcock et al., 1993; Burman et al., 1992; Cordova et al., 1993; Moffitt et al., 2001; Ridley & Feldman, 2003; Telch & Lindquist, 1984), and insecure patterns of attachment (Bartholomew et al., 2001; Bookwala, 2002; Roberts & Noller, 1998).

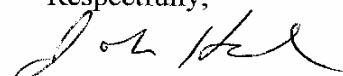
4. Abuse and control. Men engage in more sexual coercion, account for nearly all rapes, and can more easily intimidate physically; but the genders engage in overall comparable levels of abuse and control, such as diminishment of partner's self-esteem, isolation and jealousy, using children and economic abuse (Coker et al., 2002; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2004; Hammock & O'Hearn, 2002; Kasian & Painter, 1992; Stacey et al., 1994; Straus et al., 1980). Female victims have more reason to be in fear of physical danger, but victims of both genders fear *emotional* harm. Due to cultural norms that require men to present a strong façade and that minimize female-perpetrated abuse (Mooney, 2000; Straus et al., 1997; Sorenson & Taylor, 2005), men are less likely to verbalize fear of any kind (Dutton & Nicholls, 2005; Hines et al., in press).

5. Effects of partner abuse on children. Of equal, and perhaps greater, concern than the abuse inflicted by intimate partners upon each other is the effect that such abuse has on children. In families, the highest rates of serious physical abuse (punching, kicking, biting, chocking, beating up, use of weapons) are perpetrated by siblings upon one another. Interparental violence accounts for the lowest rates, half as frequent as assaults by parents on children, or by children on parents (Straus & Gelles, 1990). Children who have witnessed their parents physically abuse

one another are at higher risk than other children for experiencing emotional and conduct disturbance, deterioration in peer and family relations, and poor school performance (Wolak & Finlehor, 1998); and they incur these problems regardless of the parent's gender (English et al., 2003; Fergusson & Horwood, 1998; Johnston & Roseby, 1997; Mahoney et al., 2003). There is also a high correlation between perpetration of spousal abuse and child abuse for both genders (Appel & Holden, 1998; Margolin & Gordin, 2003; Straus & Smith, 1990). The overall impact on children of having witnessing interparental violence versus having been physically abused are comparable (Kitzmann et al., 2003), but verbal and emotional abuse directed by either the mother or father against a child may cause the greatest damage (English et al., 2003; Moore & Pepler, 1998). Correlational studies indicate that child witnesses to interparental violence are at equal, or greater, risk for becoming depressed, abusing drugs and themselves perpetrating partner violence as adults when mother was the abuser (Kaura et al., 2004; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 1995; Sommer, 1994; Straus, 1992). And finally, research shows that family violence is a complex phenomenon, characterized by a variety of possible pathways of abuse, (Appel & Holden, 1998), often reciprocal (Ullman and Straus, 2003), sometimes initiated by the children (Lynch & Cicchetti, 1998; Sheehan, 1997); with stress a central mediator (Margolin & Gordis, 2003; Salzinger et al., 2003). Father-perpetrated violence is only one of several possible scenarios in any given family.

In summary, previous and current efforts to protect battered women ought to be applauded; but they are only addressing a part of the overall problem of family violence, and grossly minimize the damage caused by female-perpetrated abuse. Until *all* perpetrators of family violence are held accountable for their actions, regardless of gender, our efforts will be limited, with serious implications for future generations.

Respectfully,



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Cc: Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assembly Republican Caucus, Attention: Mark Redmond
Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts, Attention: Tracy Kenney
Assemblyman Dave Jones, Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblyman Tom Harman, Vice Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblywoman Noreen Evans, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblyman Ray Haynes, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblyman John Laird, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblyman Tim Leslie, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblyman Lloyd E. Levine, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assemblywoman Sally J. Leiber, Assembly Judiciary Committee

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April 22, 2006

Dear Assembly Member Leno:

I am writing you on behalf of myself and my colleagues from the Family Violence Treatment and Education Association, a national organization based in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area, dedicated to eradicating domestic violence (www.FAVTEA.com). We are opposed to AB 2051, the domestic violence bill sponsored by Assembly Member Rebecca Cohn, *as currently written*; however, we would be prepared to enthusiastically endorse it if the language could be changed to include male heterosexual victims.

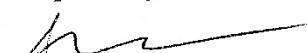
Since 1992, both as a social worker working with troubled families and as a court-certified batterer intervention provider working with individuals convicted of spousal abuse, I have provided counseling services for domestic violence victims and perpetrators of both genders, including a number of gay and lesbian clients. I have also done a great deal of research on family violence. My first book, *Gender-Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse*, was published by Springer last year, and my new book, *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence: A Handbook of Gender-Inclusive Theory and Treatment*, will be published in August of this year.

Clinical experience and an exhaustive, up-to-date review of the research literature finds irrefutable evidence that heterosexual male victims represent a substantial percentage of domestic violence victims. Depending on the survey, men account for between 15% and 55% of domestic violence victims. If a victim is defined as one who has incurred physical injuries, straight men represent about 21% - 40% of the total. This is a substantial minority, certainly a much larger group than the number of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender victims combined.

For many years, I and several of my FAVTEA colleagues have also been members of Stop Abuse for Everyone (www.Safe4all.org), the first major organization dedicated to helping the underserved gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. We are therefore entirely in favor of expanding victim services to that population. But because heterosexual men make up a large number of domestic violence victims, *ignoring this population serves to inhibit rather than increase our common efforts to eradicate domestic violence*. We are concerned that when abused men are not helped, *their children are also denied services*. Did you know that in the United States, only one shelter (out of 1,800) currently accepts male victims and their children?

This bill should be amended to include express language to include heterosexual male victims, in addition to women and members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Such changes would make California law consistent with recent revisions to the Violence Against Women Act, which acknowledges the specific needs of male victims.

Respectfully,



John Hamel, LCSW
Family Violence Treatment and Education Association

— Original Message —

From: Angercounseling@aot.com
To: dsanders@sfchronicle.com
Cc: fastcars@surewest.net
Sent: Tuesday, May 02, 2006 10:02 AM
Subject: AB2051 - gender discrimination

Ms. Saunders:

A liberal Democrat, I find myself in opposition to my party on some issues as well. One of them is their stand on domestic violence. There is a bill currently working its way through the state assembly which represents the absolute worst of "politically correct" thinking and brings into question the Democratic Party's commitment to social justice. As a social worker with 14 years working in the field of domestic violence, and having done a great deal of research on this topic (see: www.FAVTEA.com, or www.JohnHamel.net), I am very much concerned about this bill. I thought you might be, too.

Last week, the California Assembly Public Safety Committee passed out assembly bill AB 2051 authored by Assembly Member Rebecca Cohn, of the 24th assembly district. The bill would help to provide educational material relating to domestic violence within the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities. The bill also requires the appointment of a representative to the Domestic Violence Advisory Counsel, which advises on policy and training to the legislature and other state governments agencies. But the bill *specifically and intentionally omits heterosexual males*,

In October 2005, a class action lawsuit was filed against the state, state agencies and several shelters regarding discrimination in the state's policy under Health and Safety Code 124250, which defined domestic violence victims as only women. Southern California attorney Marc Angelucci filed the lawsuit, Megan Black vs. California, on behalf of Megan Black, the now adult child of an abused father who was denied shelter services. Megan also suffered from mom's violence.

Angelucci had made numerous contacts to Cohn's office after it was learned that she would be introducing a bill to amend H&S code 124250 and other code sections. According to Angelucci, Cohn's office advised him that she was considering his request to include all victims, including straight males. (Males actually represent between 36% - 50% of all domestic violence victims, depending on the survey and data.)

I had a chance to see the original version of Cohn's bill. She indeed did attempt to make current law gender-inclusive, by inserting the gender-neutral term "victim" in place of "women" or "females" throughout the bill. However, for the final version of the bill (see attached) *she crossed out the gender-neutral terminology and inserted language to make sure that services would be available only to heterosexual female victims, plus gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered victims*. When I testified before the committee, I pointed out to Cohn that the numbers of straight male victims in the general population is 14 times the number of gay, lesbian and transgendered victims combined, and that there are 3 times more straight male victims of color (African-American, Asian, Latino, Native American) than all gay, lesbian and transgendered individuals. Her response was essentially that she wasn't opposed to the rights of straight male victims, but simply wanted to help the LGBT community. If you see the changes she made in the bill, you can see how disingenuous her answer was.

In spite of all the position letters urging Cohn to amend the bill to assure that all victims are recognized, she failed to respond and address the inequities. All committee members had been provided with undisputable evidence of the need to included straight males. During the hearing not a single member challenged the data or information offered to support the need to included straight males let alone ask any questions. The bill passed out of the public safety committee, with both Republicans voting against the bill, and all of the Democrats voting for the bill with the exception of one who did not vote at all.

Aside from the blatant gender discrimination, the bill is even more problematic because it is bad public policy. Most importantly, by denying services to heterosexual male victims, it also denies services to their children. Did you know that currently only one - possibly two or three at the most - shelters out of a total of 1,800 in the United States offer residential services to men and their children? Some of these men wind up sleeping in their cars, along with their children.

I am not an abused man, with an ax to grind", nor have I lost my children in a custody dispute (I have been with the same woman for 23 years, and we both love our children dearly and have no intentions of breaking up.) I am interested in this issue on a professional level, and as a citizen who is outraged about the extremes to which my party has gone to cater to special interests.

I would be happy to give you more information about what is going on with AB2051, and/or information on the current state of knowledge about domestic violence.

Respectfully,

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Family Violence Facts

**Sources include: U.S. Department of Justice,
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control**

Introduction

Each year in the United States, nearly 8.5 million incidents of intimate partner violence are reported. Family court policy assumes that most of these cases involve men's violence against women. But the data reveal that 62 percent of reported cases are against women, with 38 percent against men. (See 28)

Data on reported cases includes all types of couples: heterosexual, gay men and lesbian women. Violence occurs in all these groups. The stereotype that nearly all family violence is men hurting women is not supported by fact.

Women are far more likely to report violence against them than men. This may be because men are embarrassed when they are injured by an intimate partner, and because there is less cultural support for men to appear as victims of violence.

Here are facts about intimate partner violence based on numerous scientific studies and large data samples from the U.S. Department of Justice. References are cited by number in parentheses after each fact, and full source information is available at the end of the document.

Who initiates violence?

Most intimate partner violence is mutual, but data shows that women more often *initiate* violence. Women initiate violence 55 percent of the time; men initiate violence 45 per-

cent of the time (See 12, 17). In reported cases, 15-27 percent of men claim to use violence in self-defense; 10-21 percent of women claim self-defense. (See 3, 15)

Overall assault rates

Contrary to most cultural assumptions, women assault their partners slightly more often than men. The overall rate of physical assaults by women against their male partners is about 12.5 per 100 couples; by men against their female partners is about 11.5 per 100 couples. (See 17)

How serious is the violence?

Men are more likely to hit their partners using their hands and feet. Women more often hit their partners with objects. Weapons are used at equal rates. Slapping, pushing and less-serious violence that results in no injuries occurs in nearly 72 percent of assaults among intimate partners. Women are the perpetrators in about 57 percent of these cases. (See 19)

Who gets hurt and how?

Men suffer 33 to 43 percent of physical injuries in intimate partner assaults. (See 22, 23, 24) Women report higher levels of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, health problems and substance abuse as a consequence of physical injuries. (See 17) Men and women report comparable levels of these symptoms due to

combined physical assaults and emotional abuse or coercion. (See 25)

What about fatalities?

Men are victims in 26 percent of intimate partner homicide victims. Women are victims in 74 percent. (See 21)

How old are violent partners?

Partner assault is highest among young adults, especially in violence by women against their male partners. (See 1, 13)

Intimidation, verbal aggression

Men are more likely to use physical intimidation and sexual coercion against their partners. Women are equally or more likely to use verbal aggression, threats and emotional abuse, as well as coercive tactics such as isolating the partner, possessive jealousy, manipulation of children, legal system abuse and general control. (See 1, 7, 17)

Who reports abuse?

Men are less likely than women to report assaults against them. Both men and women under-report their own abusive behavior. (See 19)

Abuse by gay men, lesbians

Gay men report three times more physical assaults, rapes and stalking by male partners than do heterosexual men by their female partners.

Lesbian women report twice as many physical assaults, rapes and stalking than do heterosexual women by their male partners. Lesbians report 70 percent more abuse against them than do gay men. (See 19)

Children attack parents

Children punch, kick, bite or severely assault their parents at a rate of about 9 per 100 families. (See 17)

Violence affects children

When parents model violence in their own relationships, their children often adopt those same behaviors. The highest rates of punching, kicking, biting, choking, beating and use of weapons occurs between siblings. Assaults by parents on children and by children on parents occur twice as often as assault between spouses.

Children who witness violence between their parents experience emotional trauma, which often manifests in disturbed conduct, depression, drug abuse, poor school performance, and deteriorated peer and family relations. (See 20)

Correlational studies indicate that children who witness their mothers initiate violence are at equal or greater risk of depression, drug abuse and becoming abusive as adults. (See 20)

Verbal and emotional abuse against a child by a mother or father may cause the greatest damage. (See 20)

Boyfriend, girlfriend abuse

Nearly 8.8 percent of girls and 8.9 percent of boys report that they were hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend. About 11.9 percent of girls and 6.1 percent of teenage boys were physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their will with dating partners. (See 24, 27)

References

1. Coker, A., Davis, K., Arias, I., Desai, S., Sanderson, M., Brandt, H., and Smith, P. (2002). "Physical and mental health effects of intimate partner violence for men and women." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 23 (4), 260-268.
2. Hamel, J. (2006). "Domestic violence: A gender-inclusive conception." In J. Hamel, Tonia Nicholls (Eds.), "Family interventions in domestic violence: A handbook of gender-inclusive theory and treatment." New York: Springer.
3. Carrado, M., et al. (1996), "Aggression in British Heterosexual Relationships." *Aggressive Behavior*, 22, pp. 401-415.
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20. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, "Intimate Partner Violence" reports 5.3 million annual incidents of intimate partner violence among U.S. women 18 and older; 3.2 million among men. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm>

Domestic Violence
Father sues for shelters to help men victims too
Maegan Black v. California

Sources:

<http://www.nbc4.tv/news/7258466/detail.html>

Domestic violence, is a human problem, not a gender problem. But in California, it's legally defined as abuse against women. Now, a father, daughter, and three other men are suing the state, so that shelters and services will help men too. NBC4's Robert Kovacik has their story.

<http://cbs13.com/video/?id=1754@kovr.dayport.com>
http://cbs13.com/topstories/local_story_302003457.html

Jon Baird Reporting Political Commentary

(CBS 13) SACRAMENTO A men's rights group claims the domestic violence system is skewed toward women.

Today, a lawsuit was filed in Sacramento court, claiming that male victims don't get the same help as female victims. "I remember going to phone 911, saying get here now, I'm going to kill him!" said Ruth Woods. They fought all the time, often over money. Things sometimes got violent.

"I do it. I do hit. I do slap," said Ruth. "She reaches a point when she's angry, you look in her eyes, there's no one there," said Ruth's husband, David Woods. Ruth's longtime husband, David, says he's a former bouncer who didn't want to hit back. "If I hit her, I could kill her," said David.

But David claims when he went to local agencies for help, for shelter, he got nowhere. "I was told women are not the perpetrators, they are the victims," said David.

Now, a lawsuit has been filed, claiming that men are treated unfairly. According to the suit, state law even excludes male victims from domestic violence help. The health and safety code section will pay for things like housing, hotel rooms and counseling--but only for women and not men.

David insists he tried to get help from the group WEAVE--Women Escaping A Violent Environment--but was turned down. "I was told no by weave four times," said David.

WEAVE could not comment on the suit, neither could the state; they haven't seen it yet. But WEAVE is adamant they help men, too. "We do provide shelter services," said Michelle Coleman, WEAVE director of crisis services. "At WEAVE we provide services to everyone." Tell that to David, who believes that help for men is pretty scarce. In fact, even his wife believes that and his daughter too. They all think when it comes to domestic violence the deck is stacked in favor of women.

"If a man takes it, he's a pansy, a sissy. If he defends himself, he's an abuser. He just should be put in jail," said David. "It's a slap in the face to my gender. What is this, animal farm?" asked **Maegan Black**, David and Ruth's daughter.

WEAVE insists men do get help, but fewer men ask for it than women do.

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Domestic abuse role reversal

By John Simerman
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

The way David Woods describes it, what started with a few hard swats turned more violent over the years -- to a few swings with a softball bat, a bottle of Jack Daniels cracked over the head, a peppermill to the face, a shotgun barrel pointed under the chin.

At one point his wife, Ruth Woods, couldn't take it anymore. So she called 9-1-1 -- on herself. When police arrived, they wrestled her husband to the ground.

"It took our daughter to say, 'No, it's not my daddy. It's Momma,'" said Ruth Woods, who no longer beats her husband.

In 2003, around the time she kneed him "16 or 17 times" in the groin, he again called a Sacramento-area domestic violence agency for help, he said, but was turned away.

"They said women are not perpetrators of domestic violence. Women are victims," said the former Marine and bar bouncer who is hobbled by back and circulation problems. "They have programs where they will help women get into housing they can afford. That's all I wanted."

Seeking equality

Now, Woods is suing the agency and the state, claiming state grant programs that fund shelters and other domestic violence services -- and the definition of domestic violence in the state health code -- discriminate against men.

Men's rights advocates also are attacking a bill in the state Assembly that would broaden a domestic violence grant program to include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims, but not straight men.

The bid for equal services comes as a growing body of research suggests that men fall prey to domestic violence in significant numbers -- though they suffer injury less often.

Gender statistics

According to surveys cited by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 835,000 men are sexually or physically assaulted by an intimate partner every year in the United States, compared with 1.5 million women.

Crime data shows a greater imbalance, though domestic violence experts say it is probably skewed because men are less likely to report being victims.

Women accounted for 85 percent of the victims of "intimate partner violence" in 2001, a federal crime study shows. In California, four of five people arrested for spousal abuse in 2004 were male, and 85 percent of the 163 victims of homicide involving domestic violence were female.

Domestic violence reports from Contra Costa County show that 83 percent of alleged perpetrators last year were male, and 17 percent were women, although it is unclear how many were same-sex crimes.

Lack of services

What rankles advocates is the lack of shelters and other services directed at men; state funds support nearly 100 different shelter agencies, but there is just one domestic violence shelter for men in California, in Lancaster. More often, they say, local agencies refer men to homeless shelters or turn them away.

"They wind up sleeping in cars with their kids," said Michael Robinson, who is lobbying for changes in the law. "We need to address domestic violence truthfully: Guess what folks, there's women abusers and male abusers."

Currently, the bulk of funding for domestic violence is directed at female victims through programs under the state Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Health Services. Those two agencies provided a combined \$35 million last year to programs and shelter agencies.

The \$21 million granted through DHS, which helped fund 94 shelter agencies last year, specifically goes to female victims under the Battered Women Protection Act of 1994, said Michelle Mussuto, an agency spokeswoman. The OES funding does not specify a gender.

The state law that governs the DHS grant program defines domestic violence as "the infliction or threat of physical harm against past or present adult or adolescent female intimate partners and shall include physical, sexual and psychological abuse against the woman."

Updating the law

A bill by state Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell, would expand that program for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender victims. It would leave the definition of domestic violence intact.

The concern among some women's advocates is that making the definition of domestic violence neutral could force shelters to accept male victims -- which many domestic violence specialists consider impractical or harmful.

"Of course we want all victims of domestic violence to be served," said Beth McGovern, legislative coordinator for the California Commission on the Status of Women. "What's really needed is more funding, or in at least some situations separate shelters. It would be wonderful if it would be addressed down the road."

Nationwide problem

A similar debate led to changes this year in the federal Violence Against Women Act. Among the changes are a required study of domestic violence and available services for male, female, youth and child victims as well as a provision that nothing in the law prohibits male victims from receiving services.

Gloria Sandoval, executive director of STAND! Against Domestic Violence, which serves Contra Costa County, said it can be dangerous to "gender-neutralize" the issue.

"Most domestic violence agencies will acknowledge that there are male victims, but that is a different issue than saying domestic violence is gender neutral," she said. "It is important to recognize that the majority of domestic violence incidences by far are against women," she said. "To make the funding criteria neutral would take away that recognition."

The agency, which is partially funded by the state and Contra Costa County, offers crisis line and counseling services to male victims, works with local homeless shelters and provides hotel vouchers for men who need it, said Sandoval.

Just 47 out of more than 2,000 calls last year to the crisis line came from males.

Agency speaks back

Women Escaping a Violent Environment, the Sacramento agency that David Woods said he called, received more than 2,000 calls from men last year, about 10 percent of the total, said Nicolette Bautista, the agency's executive director.

Bautista would not comment on the lawsuit but said the agency has a policy to provide services to all victims of domestic violence. It has shelter space only for women.

"It's becoming less taboo for male victims to come forward," she said, "and there certainly is a need to provide similar services to them."

There could be a legal need as well. Herma Hill Kay, a Boalt Hall law professor who specializes in anti-discrimination law, said federal court decisions and state law suggest that excluding male victims from funding may violate the law.

"Equal protection under the law sounds like a cliché," said David Woods, who claims he was denied a restraining order against his wife and mocked by police when he reported being hit. "But wouldn't it be nice for someone who never got it."

Reach John Simerman at 925-943-8072 or jsimerman@cctimes.com.



Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men and Women

Jan Brown, Founder

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Don Haslam, Esq.
Mark Gilbert

Board of Directors:

March 6, 2006

Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn
State Capital
Room 3160
Sacramento, CA 94249-0024

RE: AB 2051 Cohn * Domestic Violence

POSITION: Oppose unless amended to assure benefits and services to all victims with express language too include heterosexual male and female victims.

Dear Assemblywoman Cohn,

As the Founder and Executive Director of the only national (and nationally known) toll free helpline in the country that specializes in offering support and services to heterosexual male victims of intimate partner violence I am writing in opposition of AB 2051. It is my understanding that this bill, although laudable in its intent, is limited and discriminatory in its objective.

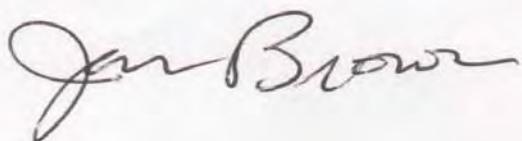
All human beings who are subjected to family violence should be welcomed and offered the same services in our country's federally funded domestic violence shelter programs in California and across the country for that matter, heterosexual male victims should not continue to be excluded as they have been for the last 35 years that we as a society have been made publicly aware of the destructive nature of domestic violence. The over 834,000 heterosexual male victims that report victimization annually (D.O.J.) are no less worthy of escaping violent relationships than there female counterparts, lesbians, gay, bi-sexual or transgender individuals.

P.O. Box 252
Harmony, Maine 04942
Business Office: 207-683-5758
Helpline: 1-888-7HELPLINE
Website: www.domesticabusehelpline.org

In the almost five and one-half years that our organization and helpline has been in existence we have had over 12,000 calls for support, referrals, information, shelter and legal assistance for male victims, 95% of which identify themselves (through self report or a concerned family member or friend) as heterosexual. If we as a society are ever to see a glimmer of hope in ending family violence all this divisiveness and polarization of victims must stop!

Please amend AB 2051 to assure that outreach, benefits and services are put in place for all victims, including heterosexual males. If I can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,



Cc:

Assembly Judiciary Committee
Assembly Republican Caucus, Attn: Mark Redmond
Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts, Attn: Tracy Kenney
Assemblyman Dave Jones (Chair Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblyman Tom Harman (Vise Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblywoman Noreen Evans (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblyman Ray Haynes (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblyman John Laird (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblyman Tim Leslie (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblyman Lloyd E. Levine (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblywoman Sally J. Leiber (Assembly Judiciary Committee)
Assemblywoman Cindy Montanez (Assembly Judiciary Committee)

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH****DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

March 14, 2006

Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn
State Capital
Room 3160
Sacramento, CA 94249-0024

RE: AB 2051 Cohn * Domestic Violence

Dear Assemblywoman Cohn,

I am writing to inform you regarding victimization in the area of Domestic Violence. I have been compiling scientific information the area for about 10 years. My work is widely cited and has been published in refereed Journals. The overall findings indicate that social science surveys and in particular representative national surveys conducted in the United States in 1975, 1985, and 1993 reveal that men are equally likely to be victims as women. With regard to the initiation of assaults, the data reveals equal culpability. With regard to injuries both genders report serious injuries requiring medical attention. However data does reveal that women are more seriously injured (60% vs 40 %) than men during domestic assaults. The most current report of my work (an annotated bibliography) can be found on line at: www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm.

I therefore urge you to amend your bill to assure services to all victims, men and women.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Martin Fiebert".

Martin Fiebert, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

4/23/06

Dear Assembly Member,

The language in AB 2051-Cohn Violence Bill excludes heterosexual males. It is difficult to imagine this as an over site. I then must assume that those drafting this bill disregard the needs of these victims and their families. W H Y ? This makes no sense . Victims are Victims.

Please alter this bill to include all victims of domestic violence.

Thanks for your consideration,

Gene Arnovitz , Domestic Violence/Anger Management Facilitator in Marin and Alameda counties (Terra Firma D.V. Counseling terrafirmadiversion@earthlink.net and John Hamel & Associates angercounseling@aol.com)

peacecoach@hotmail.com

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APR 24 2006

April 24, 2006

RE: AB 2051 – Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

POSITION: I opposed this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits be available to *all* victims, with express language to include heterosexual male victims.

Dear Assembly Member:

This letter is written to express my concerns regarding the Cohn Domestic Violence Bill. Unless amendments are made to assure that benefits are made available to heterosexual male victims, I strongly oppose this bill. I am a Ph.D. student in Psychology with a specialization in Law and Forensic Psychology at Simon Fraser University, where I obtained my Master's in the same discipline in 2005. I am also a part-time Research Assistant for the Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission, BC Mental Health and Addictions Institute in British Columbia, Canada. My specific concerns about the proposed bill stem from my research expertise in domestic violence and intimate partner aggression. I have a specific interest in the mental health variables associated with intimate partner abuse perpetration and victimization of *both* male and female partners. I have presented my research findings at several international scholarly conferences and have recently co-authored a chapter on the assessment of high risk perpetrators of intimate partner abuse.

My recommendations for revising the language in the bill reflect several issues:

1. Male victims comprise a very large number of domestic violence victims who suffer physical injury (approx. 30 – 40%). In my own research, I examined the prevalence and frequency of victimization and perpetration of partner abuse among women self-identified as domestic violence. Combining victim and undergraduate samples, results indicated that more than half of the women had perpetrated physical aggression against their male intimate partner and 93% had perpetrated some form of psychological abuse.
2. The research evidence now demonstrates that violence in intimate relationships is reciprocal, not unilateral. For example, Stets and Straus (1992) found that of the incidents of violence reported by 526 dating couples (male-female relationships), at least half were cases of reciprocal violence, compared to approximately a quarter being cases of male-only violence and the other quarter being female-only incidents of violence.
3. When male victims who have children are denied services, their children are also denied services.
4. By focusing uniquely on female victims, the wording of the bill is expressively sexist and discriminatory.

It is my belief that unless amended to assure that services be available to all victims, *including* heterosexual male victims, this bill should not be passed. All victims of domestic violence, regardless of gender and/or sexual orientation, should have the right to access the services.

Sincerely,

Sarah L. Desmarais, M.A.

APR 24 2006

**Dr. Laura Petracek, L.C.S.W.
1208 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94702
415-771-7150**

Dear Congressperson,

My name is Dr. Laura Petracek. I am a psychologist and Author of the book "An Anger Workbook for Women." I have counseled over 300 heterosexual women for domestic violence, which means over 300 heterosexual men were victims. As a provider of services for victims of domestic violence, all victims of domestic violence, including men, women, as well as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals should be included in the bill. 1) Male victims comprise a very large number of DV victims, at least 30%-40% if one defines a victim as someone who suffered a DV related physical injury; and their numbers are certainly much greater than the number of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender victims. 2) When male victims who have children are denied services, their children are also denied services. 3) The law is blatantly discriminatory.

Sincerely,
Dr. Laura Petracek
Dr. Laura Petracek

March 2, 2006

Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn
State Capital, Room 3160
Sacramento, CA 04249-0024

Re: AB 2051 Cohn * Domestic Violence
Position: Oppose unless amended Dear
Assemblywoman Cohn,

Language in AB 2051 needs to clearly document that domestic violence services are available for *heterosexual women and men*, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders.

Implicit association occurs when the ideologically held beliefs of some people cause the population in general to become biased through stereotypical presentations. To understand more about *implicit association* please visit the Harvard website www.implicit.harvard.edu.

Because of *implicit association* many people, including African Americans and other minorities, are distrustful and fearful of African American males. Criminal justice data has caused many people to *implicitly associate* the majority of African American males with violent criminal behavior.

Studies document that most people in the criminal justice system, public policy makers, advocates, the media and the general population associate American males regardless of race or age as being domestic violence *abusers, not victims*. This is also because of criminal justice data. It should be, but is not obvious that criminal justice data is illustrative of only a small subgroup of the population and is not representative of the population in general.

And in fact criminal justice data can be used to document that the vast majority of African American males do not engage in violent criminal behavior and that the vast majority of American males are not violent domestic violence abusers.

VAWA's Implicit Bias

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the media have created a national "*implicit domestic violence association*." When people hear or read domestic violence "victim" they think of women and when they hear domestic violence abuser they think of "men."

There is *rarely if ever*, any mention of men as victims and women as abusers in VAWA funded programs. To date, not a single dime of VAWA funds has been awarded to a program that primarily serves heterosexual male domestic violence victimization. Heterosexual males are underrepresented as "victims," and in fact males are minimized, marginalized, or ignored by VAWA and the vast majority of domestic violence organizations.

The 2005 Senate VAWA hearings document the power of the "*implicit association*' of males as domestic violence abuser and females as the "victim." *In these hearings the issue of male*

victimization was ignored by each and every domestic violence advocate. It was clear to all of the advocates who appeared before the Senate hearings that women are the "victims" and men are their "abusers."

Sheriff Ted Sexton testified that the National Sheriffs' Association plays a key role in VAWA's mandated coordinated community response to prevent, investigate, and prosecute crimes of violence [by heterosexual men] against [heterosexual] women. *Victims* are women not men.

Actress Salma Hayek testified that every 15 seconds a woman is beaten [implicitly by a man]. The Executive Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime testified that violence against [heterosexual] women [implicitly by heterosexual men] is a key focus of her agencies work. *Victims* are women not men.

Lynn Rosenthal of the National Network to End Domestic Violence testified that violence against [heterosexual] women [implicitly by heterosexual men] continues to affect our country in epidemic proportions. *Victims* are women not men.

Senator Leahy testified [heterosexual] women are being killed by [heterosexual] men each year and Senator Feingold testified that [heterosexual] men abuse, rape and murder [heterosexual] women. *Victims* are women not men.

The 2005 VAWA Senate Hearings leaves no doubt that when the majority of those in the criminal justice system, public policy makers, advocates, the media, and the general population hear or read domestic violence "victim" they think of women and not men.

California's Implicit Bias

As noted above there is little doubt if "woman" is replaced with "victim" most people will continue to associate heterosexual women as the "victims." It appears that the AB 2051 Bill is an attempt to include underrepresented "victims." by specifically documenting who "victims" actually are. However, by excluding any mention of heterosexual male victimization in AB 2051 heterosexual males will continue be thought as "abusers" and not "victims."

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control *Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): Fact Sheet* documents that nearby 5.3 million incidents of IPV occur among U.S. women 18 and older, and 3.2 million occur among men <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm>.

The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) documents 8.8% of girls and 8.9% of boys report that they were hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend and that 11.9% of girls and 6.19% of teenage boys were physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their will with a dating partner www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/SS/SS5302.pdf

Richard L. Davis – rldavis@post.harvard.edu
Vice President - Family Nonviolence, Inc.
www.Familynonviolence.org

AB 2051



GRANT JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Adult Education, Community & Vocational Training Programs

Grant Adult Education
Domestic Violence Batterer's Treatment Program

O

April 24, 2006

RE: AB2051- Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

POSITION: I oppose this bill unless it is amended to assume benefits to be available to all victims, with express language to include heterosexual male victims.

Dear Mervyn M. Dymally,

My name is Brandy Hunter and I have worked with the Domestic Violence Batterer's Treatment program for the past 6 years through Grant Adult Education. Our program is a mandated 52-week Domestic Violence program offered to male and female offenders. The AB2051- Cohn Domestic Violence Bill is a constructive development; however, it is still discriminatory by excluding male heterosexual victims. I would completely support the bill if it were amended to include ALL victims...gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender AND heterosexual male victims.

Thank you for your time,

Brandy Hunter

Grant Domestic Violence Batterer's Treatment Program

LIFE CHANGE COUNSELING

**William Flaggs, Director
2226 Montevideo Drive
Pittsburg, CA 94565
925-432-9430**

April 24, 2006

Mark Leno
Assemblyman
Sacramento, CA

RE: AB2051-Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

Position: I oppose this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits are made available to all victims, with express language to include heterosexual male victims.

Dear Assemblyman Leno:

I am William Flaggs, a retired Deputy Probation Officer with 25 years of service in Contra Costa County with experience in the Domestic Violence Unit. I have interviewed and supervised numerous men and women who were perpetrators or victims of violence in the community and home.

The fact that male victims do exist is camouflaged by the notoriety that the male gender ignited the anti-domestic violence against women's movement. The up-scaling of intervention and prevention of domestic violence resources is a needed and positive development. Nevertheless, not to acknowledge the inverse affect, that men can also be victims, creates a harmful and corrupting influence on society. Sending this Bill forward without including men as victims would be sending the wrong message to society, that we will do everything within our power to protect women from this type of violence but not men. You must not lose site of the real picture by focusing on solving only part of the problem by directing your Bill to focus only on the issue of the female victims and ignore the male victims.

Key elements towards progress in reducing domestic violence will always be missing if male victims are excluded from this bill. At the moment an individual is abused by another individual in his or her home or community that person becomes a victim, no matter whether male or female. A victim is a victim. All deserve to have equal access to quality services.

Thank you,

William Flaggs
Director

cc: Assembly members
Rebecca Cohn
Jackie Goldberg
Mervyn M. Dymally

WF/jm

AB 2051
P

PEACE CREATIONS

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San Ramon, CA 94583
(925) 833-9505, FAX: (925) 833-9507
e-mail: peacecreations@yahoo.com

2960 Camino Diablo, Ste. 220
Walnut Creek, CA 945957
(925) 988-9505
www.peacecreations.org

April 24, 2006

Mervyn M. Dymally
(916) 319-2052
FAX: (916) 319-2152
Assemblymember.dymally@assembly.ca.gov

APR 24 2006

RE: AB 2051 - Cohn Domestic Violence Bill

POSITION: I oppose this bill unless it is amended to assure that benefits be available to all victims, with express language to include heterosexual male victims.

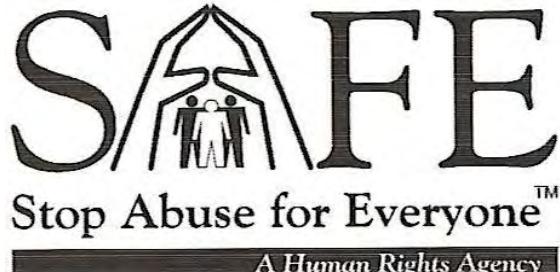
Dear Assembly Member:

I am the director of Peace Creations, an agency that provides batterer's intervention services to both men and women. Over those years we have worked with over 2,000 clients from all walks of life. Based on 13 years of experience in working with men, women and youth, I am dismayed by the language in AB 2051. Clearly, victims of domestic violence are not just women. Victims of domestic violence include women, men (both heterosexual and homosexual) as well as trans gender individuals. Please alter the bill to be gender inclusive or do not pass the amendment at all. This would relieve gender bias as found in many areas of this field and begin the process of a holistic approach to the problem.

Sincerely,


Thomas W. Chapman
Director

"THE QUEST FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD BEGINS WHEN I TAKE THE FIRST STEP"



Stop Abuse For Everyone International Board

PO Box 951, Tualatin, OR 97062, USA

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R.L. McNeely, Ph.D., J.D.

Stop Abuse for Everyone™

A Human Rights Agency

Dear Committee on Public Safety Member:
Re: AB 2051

April 23, 2006

We draw your attention to language in AB 2051 which correctly extends Department of Health Services grants, trainings and other programs related to domestic violence currently provided to heterosexual females to members of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered communities. Perhaps due to the personal animus of the sponsoring legislator towards this particular segment of the population or other reason, we note that a significant sector of the population that also has been amply proven to represent a significant segment of domestic violence victims-heterosexual males are not included.

We trust that human decency, a desire to serve all persons in a non-discriminatory manner and sensitivity to the equal protection provisions of the California Constitution will prevail upon you to include in the measure changed language in the applicable sections to the effect that the provisions of the measure shall include and apply to: "all victims of domestic violence, including men, women, as well as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals," or more simply, "all victims of domestic violence, regardless of gender and/or sexual orientation."

We note that the bill also: "would authorize the use by the State Department of Health Services of funds from the Equality in Domestic Abuse Prevention and Services Fund to distribute a brochure specific to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender domestic abuse." Just in case DHS wants to save some money and time, such brochures for these specific individuals and communities already exist, are user-friendly, professional in appearance and are available at a low cost or by special contract with DHS (including one for heterosexual males) via our website: www.safe4all.org. We hope you or a staff member will pass this useful information on to the appropriate person at DHS should AB 2051 become law.

As a non-profit charitable human rights agency we do not take a position either for or against this or any other specific legislation, but submit our views for educational purposes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip W. Cook".

Philip W. Cook
Executive Director

"Our Name is Our Mission"