April 13, 2007

Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.               Senator Richard G. Lugar
201 Russell Building                     306 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510                    Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Biden and Lugar:

Domestic violence is an important social problem. Around the world, research conclusively shows that women are at least as likely as men to engage in partner abuse.¹

In recent years, several countries have passed laws designed to stop partner abuse. One of the reasons why these laws have failed to stop domestic violence is because they have not provided needed services to female abusers. In addition, these laws have resulted in widespread civil rights violations of persons falsely accused of abuse.

These are some examples:

- **In Australia** the federal government has run advertising campaigns that falsely portray only men as perpetrators. Refuge (shelter) services are provided exclusively for women. Anger management services are available for men, yet there are none for violent women. One Auditor General report found that only 9% of restraining orders that are granted based solely on the assertions of the "victim" are found to be continued when the alleged perpetrator is able to give their side of the story.² In **Tasmania**, the Family Violence Act of 2004 defines both economic and emotional abuse as **criminal offenses**.

- **In Canada**, the domestic violence laws are systemically applied on a gender discriminatory basis, as a result of federal and local legislation, regulation, and enforcement policies. “This is contrary not only to Section 15 of the Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms but to international conventions such as Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 2 and 26 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.”

- **In Germany**, the Force Law ("Gewaltschutzgesetz") allows alleged aggressors to be expelled from their residence for up to 14 days while ignoring the presumption of innocence. Michael Bock, professor of criminology at the University of Mainz, commented that the Gewaltschutzgesetz “gives an effective tool to the hands of mothers who want to separate children from their fathers. ... It is not meant to start a constructive dialog between the parties, but to expropriate, disempower, lock out, and punish men.”

- **India** enacted its Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in 2005, which defines domestic “violence” broadly to include any form of physical, emotional, or economic abuse. False allegations of abuse have now become common, resulting in many husbands taking their own lives.³ The Cruelty Against Women Law “Section 498a” has been widely abused leading to arrests of innocent elders and women. The Indian Supreme Court has termed this as “legal terrorism.”⁴
• In Mexico, the domestic violence law came into effect in February of this year. Under the law, men found guilty of being jealous or even sexual indifferent to their wives could face up to five years in prison.5

• New Zealand passed its Domestic Violence Act in 1996. As a result, according to Casandra Hewitt-Reid, “it is possible for a perfectly innocent man, who has done nothing outside the law, to be sent to prison on one person’s unsubstantiated word.”6 Recently, two researchers accused the New Zealand Families Commission of “ideologically driven” bias in its one-sided portrayal of domestic violence.7

• Spain passed its Integral Law on Gender Violence in 2004. Recently the Dean Judge of Barcelona Maria Sanahuja criticized the Law, saying it has brought about the “massive detention of men for scarcely any reason” which she condemns as “a repugnant violation of fundamental rights.”8 Following implementation of the law, the number of intimate partner homicides of both men and women increased.9

It has come to our attention that consideration is being given to an “International Violence Against Women Act.” This bill is based on a flawed World Health Organization survey that neglected to survey men and therefore failed to reveal the extent of female violence. Based on initial descriptions of I-VAWA,10 we believe that passage of this bill would not only fail to stop partner abuse, it would also inflict serious and lasting harm to families and children around the world.

We, the undersigned 37 organizations around the world, strongly urge you to speak out against the International Violence Against Women Act.

Signed,

Australia:  
Tony Miller  
Dads in Distress, Inc.
James Adams  
Fathers-4-Equality-Australia
Brett Kessner  
Men’s Confraternity
Sue Price  
Men’s Rights Agency
Edward Dabrowski  
Shared Parenting Council of Australia

Canada:  
Georges Dupuy  
Coalition pour la Défense des Droits des Hommes du Québec
Earl Silverman  
Family of Men
Kris Titus  
Fathers-4-Justice Canada
Daniel Laforest  
Fathers-4-Justice Québec
Brian Jenkins  
Fathers Are Capable Too: Parenting Association

Lise Bilodeau  
L’Action des Nouvelles Conjointes du Québec
Jean-Claude Boucher  
L’après-Rupture, Inc.
Brian Johnson  
Regina Shared Parenting Network
John F. Smith  
World Father’s Union

Czech Republic:  
Eduard Bakalar  
Consultancy for Divorcing Parents with Children
Jiří Vodiccka  
PVVP - Real Equality
Jiri Solc  
*Cesky Svaz Muzu*  
Lubos Patera  
*Spravedlnost Detem*  

**Germany:**  
Dietmar Albers  
*DAS Familienrecht*  
Dr. Eugen Maus  
*MANNdat e.V.*  

**India:**  
B.S. Saraswathi  
*Asha Kiran*  
P.R. Gokul  
*Protect Indian Family Foundation*  
Uma Challa  
*Save Indian Family Foundation*  

**Ireland:**  
Mary T. Cleary  
*AMEN – Abused Men*  

**Netherlands:**  
Th. M. Nieuwenhuizen  
*Netherlands Foundation for Parents without Access*  

**New Zealand:**  
Jim Bailey  
*Hands on Equal Parents*  
John Potter  
*Masculinist Evolution New Zealand*  

**Spain:**  
Antonio Luengo  
*Asociacion para el Estudio del Maltrato y el Abuso*  

**United Kingdom:**  
Erin Pizzey  
*International Founder of Refuges (Shelters) for Victims of Domestic Violence*  
John Bannon  
*Familieslink*  
Artur J. N. Oborski  
*Families Against Rough Treatment*  
David Hughes  
*ManKind Initiative*  
Anne Harris  
*St. Neots Abuse Project (SNAP)*  

---

1 [http://www.mediaradar.org/international_dating_violence_study_results.php](http://www.mediaradar.org/international_dating_violence_study_results.php)  
3 [http://suicidenoteofhusband.blogspot.com/](http://suicidenoteofhusband.blogspot.com/)  
6 [http://nzmera.orcon.net.nz/femfasci.html](http://nzmera.orcon.net.nz/femfasci.html)  
7 [http://subs.nzherald.co.nz/section/1/story.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10410452](http://subs.nzherald.co.nz/section/1/story.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10410452)  