

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

We are writing today to express serious concern over the news that the Department of Justice (DOJ) intends to merge the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) into the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), despite explicit statutory language barring such a move. The DOJ cannot lawfully consolidate OVW into OJP without explicit Congressional authorization, and such an action would exceed the DOJ's administration authority while directly undermining Congressional intent.

The 2002 Violence Against Women Office Act, as amended by the 2022 Violence Against Women Act reauthorization, states that the office “*shall be a separate and distinct office within the Department of Justice, not subsumed by any other office*” and shall be led by a Senate-confirmed Director (34 U.S.C. § 10442-10445). Prior to this, VAWA grants had been administered by OJP, but Congress realized that these programs—and the victims they were intended to serve—were getting lost in the OJP bureaucracy. That is why Congress explicitly created OVW as a separate and distinct office to ensure a focused, coordinated federal response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. In enacting this reauthorization, Congress understood that OVW needed a separate office to reflect the unique nature of working directly with survivors, practitioners, and service providers. Any effort to consolidate OVW within OJP cannot proceed without Congressional approval. The DOJ lacks the Constitutional authority to either eliminate or subsume an independent office that Congress has created and repeatedly reauthorized.

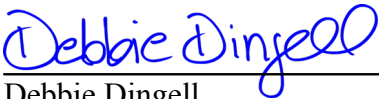
Beyond violating the legal prohibition, this reorganization would be a profound step backwards in the federal government's response to violence against women. First enacted in 1994, and through its bipartisan reauthorizations, VAWA has transformed the nation's response to domestic and sexual violence. Under the leadership of OVW, the government has established a cross-coordinated response that brings together law enforcement, prosecutors, victim advocates, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders to efficiently prevent and respond to violence against women. As an independent office, OVW provides both subject matter expertise and cost-effective federal investment, with staff that oversee the full grants cycle. This approach lowers administrative overhead, eliminates bureaucratic silos, and builds institutional knowledge. Moreover, OVW provides the only direct engagement for victims and survivors of crime within the federal government.

We ask the DOJ to abandon any proposal to unlawfully consolidate OVW into OJP and instead, reaffirm its commitment to maintaining OVW as an independent office as Congress intended and in accordance with the law. A robust OVW office remains one of our nation's best tools to help combat violence against women and girls.

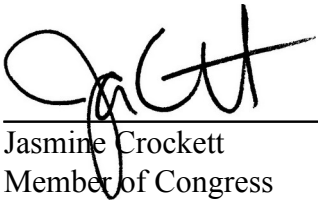
Sincerely,



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



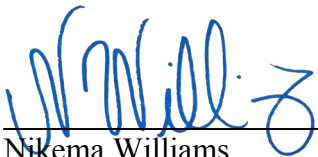
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



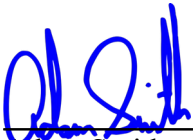
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



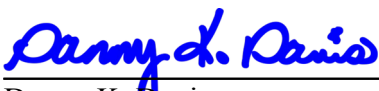
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress




Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



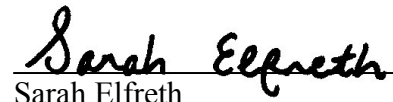
Young Kim
Member of Congress



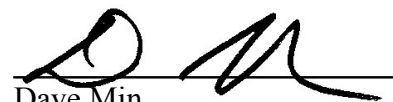
Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



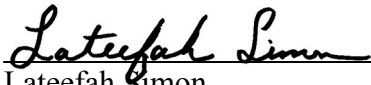
Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Dave Min
Member of Congress



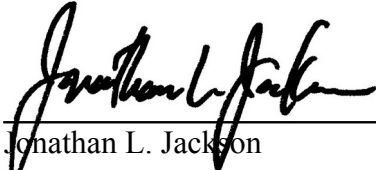
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



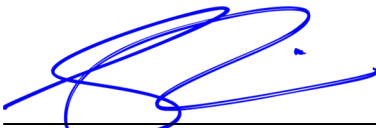
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress



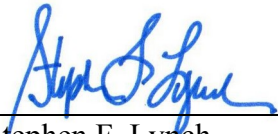
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



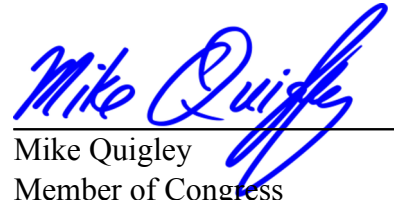
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



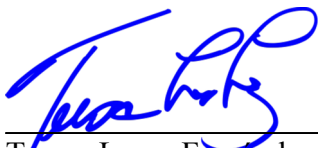
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



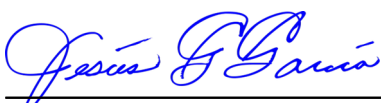
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



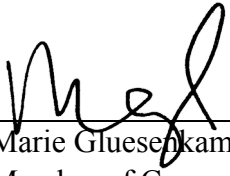
Maggie Goodlander
Member of Congress



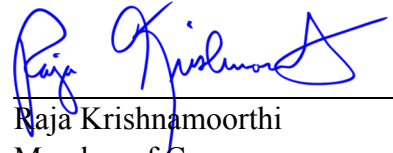
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



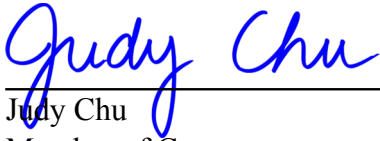
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Marie Gluesenkamp Perez
Member of Congress



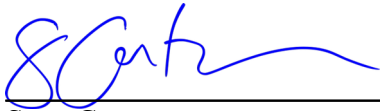
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



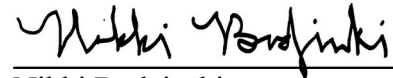
Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



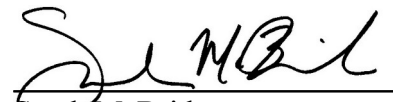
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



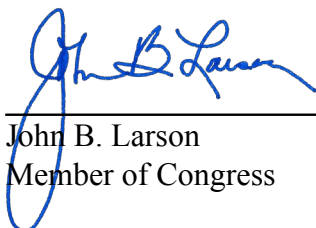
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



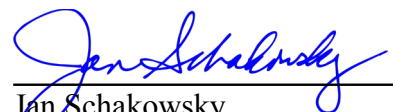
Al Green
Member of Congress



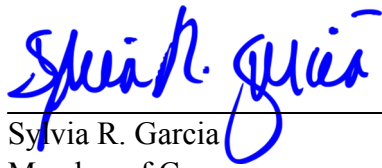
Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress




Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



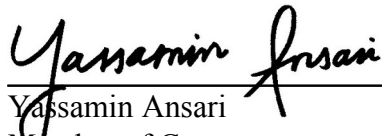
Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



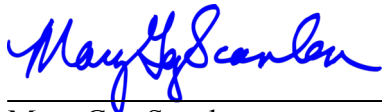
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress