



# **ACTION ALERT**

## **Urge your Senator to End Violence Against Women!**

End violence, empower women and keep hope alive

The International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA) was introduced in the last Congress by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee leadership. In support of I-VAWA, Women's Division board members and conference mission coordinators for social action sent postcards in October 2008 to their members of Congress urging them to co-sponsor the I-VAWA legislation. We now have a new Congress, a new Committee and a new opportunity to end violence against women. We need your help to make sure the bill is reintroduced as soon as possible. The new Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator John Kerry's commitment to women's rights is clear: as he said "We cannot afford to leave women behind. The world needs to help empower them with possibilities and keep hope alive..."

I-VAWA creates such possibilities and supports innovative approaches to ending violence against women globally by supporting survivors, holding perpetrators accountable and preventing violence. Violence against women is a crime and a worldwide pandemic - at least 1 out of every 3 women worldwide is beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Ranking Senate Foreign Relations Committee Member Senator Richard Lugar has championed this bill since its inception and continues to speak out against violence.

### **Look at what the passage of I-VAWA would mean to women around the world:**

- Increased efforts to prevent violence against women during conflict and in humanitarian settings.
- Increased pressure to find perpetrators and bring them to justice.
- Strengthened capacity of women's organizations working to bring such perpetrators of violence to justice.
- Increased opportunities for women, free from violence, to seek testing or treatment for HIV/AIDS or disclose their HIV status without fear.
- Increased economic and educational opportunities that would reduce the vulnerability of women at risk of violence.

*From Women Thrive Worldwide, Amnesty International and Family Violence Prevention Fund*



Urge your Senators to support the Senate Foreign Relations Committee leadership's reintroduction of the International Violence Against Women Act. Ask them to support the reintroduction of the International Violence Against Women Act and to co-sponsor the legislation when it is re-introduced. To contact your Senators call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

For further information read our September 2008 Action Alert entitled *Act to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Tell Congress to Support the International Violence Against Women Act*. To obtain a copy of this alert visit the Women's Division website at [www.umwmission.org](http://www.umwmission.org) or call (202) 488-5660.

You may also visit the following websites for more information on I-VAWA: [www.amnestyusa.org/ivawa](http://www.amnestyusa.org/ivawa), [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org) or [www.womenthrive.org/ivawa](http://www.womenthrive.org/ivawa).

Read *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2008* #3423. Violence Against Women and Children, pg. 507 – 511.

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