

**Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
2011 General Assembly - Legislative Report
February 8, 2011**

- **FY 11 Budget – Shelter Funding:** The House subcommittee that handles DHS' budget has recommended that all state funds for domestic violence and sexual assault services (\$4.48M) be eliminated in the FY 2011 Amended budget and that these funds be replaced by Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funding. The full House will vote on the budget on Thursday, Feb. 10, and then it will go to the Senate. **Advocates need to contact members of Sen. Unterman's subcommittee (listed below) which writes DHS' budget to ask them to restore state funding for domestic violence programs in the FY 11 Amended budget.** GCADV is concerned that relying so heavily on TANF to fund domestic violence programs will hurt victim services because TANF funding is subject to very different restrictions than state funding. Although GCADV is still gathering additional information, it appears that TANF funds cannot be used to pay for the same expenses that state dollars would cover. Additionally, Congress is in the process of reauthorizing TANF and is likely to impose new restrictions on TANF funds. Given the efforts to reduce the federal budget, Congress may also decrease the total TANF block grant for Georgia. Domestic violence programs are already struggling to maintain services given that state funds have not been increased since 2001 and the costs of providing services have increased dramatically during this time. Eliminating all state support for domestic violence programs is simply not good public policy.
- **FY 12 Budget – Shelter Funding:** Rep. Penny Houston's Appropriations subcommittee will now focus on the FY 12 budget. Next year's budget contains the same recommendation as the FY 11 Amended budget: to eliminate all state funding for domestic violence and sexual assault and replace those funds with TANF. **Advocates need to contact members of Rep. Houston's subcommittee (listed below) to ask them to keep all state funding for domestic violence programs in the budget in FY 12.**
- **Contact information for key budget committees:** If your legislator (or any legislator who represents an area served by your program) is a member of either Rep. Houston's or Sen. Unterman's subcommittees, it is vital that you contact these legislators immediately. It would be helpful if staff, board members, and volunteers for

**Stop Violence
Against Women
Day** was a huge success! More than 200 advocates came to the Capitol to raise our voices on behalf of survivors. Thanks to everyone who took the time to come to the Capitol!

your program could reach out to these legislators as well. Even if these legislators are not from your community, you should still reach out to them and let them know that we need their help in preserving state funds for domestic violence services. The House and Senate subcommittee members and their phone numbers are listed below.

Representatives:

Penny Houston (Chair): 404-463-2247
Keith Heard: 404-656-0220
Michele Henson: 404-656-7859
Judy Manning: 404
Greg Morris: 404-657-8441
Quincy Murphy: 404-656-0265
Mary Margaret Oliver: 404-656-0265
Ed Setzler: 404-656-0177

Senators:

Renee Unterman (Chair): 404 463-1368
Buddy Carter (Vice-chair): 404-656-5109
Greg Goggans: 404-463-5263
Johnny Grant: 404-656-0082

Bill Heath: 404-656-3943
Judson Hill: 404-656-0150
Valencia Seay: 404-656-5095
Freddie Powell Sims: 404-463-5259
Horacena Tate: 404-463-8053

- Other legislation of interest: Rep. Bobby Franklin has filed **HB 14** which would **change references to "victim" to "accuser" in the definitions of family violence, rape, and stalking.** A similar bill was introduced last session and did not receive a hearing; the bill is not likely to move forward. **HB 87** and **SB 40** would make major changes to our immigration policy, including **allowing law enforcement to check the immigration status of any criminal suspect and expanding the use of 287(g) agreements which allow local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration law.** GCADV is concerned that these proposals may have the unintended consequence of discouraging immigrant and refugee from seeking assistance from law enforcement if they fear negative immigration consequences. **SB 46** would **require local school boards to adopt a teen dating violence curriculum and a dating violence policy.** **SB 52** would **require sheriffs to notify TPO petitioners when a TPO is served.** Both SB 46 and SB 52 were introduced last session but did not pass.

Identify your elected officials at <http://votesmart.org/index.htm> and find bills & legislators' contact information at <http://www.legis.state.ga.us/>.