

# GENERAL FEDERATION of WOMEN'S CLUBS



November 21, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

As International President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), an organization of 75,000 members dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service, I am writing to support the nomination of Rosie Hidalgo as Director of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs has supported local domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers long before the first Violence Against Women Act was passed by Congress in 1994. Today, we continue to assist survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking with our advocacy, local community financial support, scholarships, donations of time and material resources, and commitment to prevention and education.

Volunteers can provide community support and leadership, but basic federal programs must be expanded and strengthened to respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. The Office on Violence Against Women at the Department of Justice has a critical role in ensuring the nation's response supports our local communities in addressing and preventing gender-based violence. This office also provides essential leadership across the federal government to prioritize prevention, program services for victims and their families, legal services, and training to improve trauma-informed law enforcement response.

Rosie Hidalgo is eminently qualified to lead the Office on Violence Against Women and is beloved by the advocacy community and known for her leadership and vision. She is an attorney with more than 25 years of experience in legislative policy development and implementation, advocacy, and grant and program management. She is experienced in developing broad-based coalitions to develop and implement innovative strategies and programming.

Ms. Hidalgo is currently serving on the White House Gender Policy Council as Senior Advisor on Gender-Based Violence and as Special Assistant to the President. Previous positions include Senior Director of Policy at Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@Network for Healthy Families and Communities (now called Esperanza United) and Deputy Director for Policy at the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women.

Ms. Hidalgo first visited GFWC Headquarters during the 2016-2018 Administration to brief the Executive Committee on policy initiatives when she worked at Casa de Esperanza. We met with her at the White House Gender Policy Council, and she recently presented the keynote address at


our national leadership conference in August 2022. GFWC is governed by an Executive Committee of eight and a 200 member-strong Board of Directors representing every state, including eight Region Presidents, 50 State Presidents, and 16 State Directors of Junior Clubs. At the grassroots level, more than 3,200 local club presidents represent over 75,000 clubwomen.

Thank you for your critically important work reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act of 2022. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic insecurity, and many homes are less safe.

We strongly support the nomination of Rosie Hidalgo as the Director of the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women. It is time for immediate consideration.

Please let us know if we can provide additional information. I can be reached at 202-347-3168 or [dstrahanoski@gfwc.org](mailto:dstrahanoski@gfwc.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra A. Strahanoski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debra A. Strahanoski  
GFWC International President