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Formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund

May 14, 2013

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Chairman, Judiciary Committee  
United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee  
United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

For more than thirty years, Futures Without Violence, formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund, has worked to prevent and end violence against women and children in the United States and around the world. We have found a stalwart ally in Acting Associate Attorney General Tony West and strongly support the nomination of Tony West to become the Associate Attorney General of the United States.

Throughout his career, Mr. West has demonstrated his commitment to protecting the most vulnerable by crafting collaborative solutions to meet the needs of victims and working to *prevent* violence against women and children. Early on in his career, as Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of California, Mr. West worked closely with the victim advocate community to prosecute child sexual exploitation cases. More recently, as Acting Associate Attorney General, Mr. West has prioritized the expansion of the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, a successful model of violence prevention that currently operates in ten cities across the country to build local capacity to address youth violence. In our work with Mr. West on the Defending Childhood Initiative, we have seen first-hand his skill, commitment and passion to reducing crime and violence and helping children who have witnessed or been abused as a core strategy in that effort.

Under Mr. West's leadership over the last year, the Department of Justice has instituted programmatic reforms to strengthen its response to domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault, including programs such as the Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative. This initiative supports the coordinated efforts of law enforcement, prosecutors, health professionals and victim service advocates to reduce domestic violence homicides through improved identification of, and services for, high risk victims and improved monitoring of high-risk offenders. The updated National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations ("SAFE Protocol"), also released during Mr. West's service as Acting Associate Attorney General, helps to standardize the quality of care for sexual assault victims.

The SAFE Protocol provides critical guidelines for criminal justice and health care practitioners to respond to the immediate needs of sexual assault victims, emphasizing coordinated community response, victim-centered care, and use of high quality medical forensic practices to better hold offenders accountable and minimize victim trauma.

We look forward to Mr. West's continued leadership overseeing the creation of the Attorney General's Task Force on American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence, which will have the important responsibility of working closely with tribal governments and the Department of Interior to address the epidemic of children's exposure to violence in tribal communities.

The role of Associate Attorney General is of vital importance to those who advocate for a future without violence against women and children. The position oversees the Justice Department's grant-making programs including those administered through the Office on Violence Against Women, the Office of Justice Programs and the Office of Community Oriented Policing, which is why it is essential that Mr. West has demonstrated a deep understanding of the complexities of violence prevention and response, and has demonstrated success in crafting multi-disciplinary and collaborative approaches to addressing violence against women and children.

We hope that the Senate will confirm Mr. West promptly to serve as the Associate Attorney General for the United States.

Sincerely,



Esta Soler  
President and Founder  
Futures Without Violence

