



National Coalition For Men

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On Men's Health

November 4, 2009

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

Jennifer Kaplan

Attorney-Advisor

800 K Street, N.W., Suite 920

Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Ms. Kaplan,

John Lucas, the Wisconsin liaison for the National Coalition For Men (NCFM), has asked NCFM to send you this letter. NCFM was founded in 1977 and has members across America and in several countries. We are concerned with harmful gender based stereotypes against males.

A West Virginia court recently voided the state's regulations for domestic violence programs because the regulations denied abused men access to publicly funded shelters and denied women abusers access to treatment.

The court ruled the Family Violence Prevention Services Board's policies and procedures for licensing domestic violence shelters, certifying advocates, and distributing state funding distorted lawmakers' intent and violated the free speech right of others.

The court also held West Virginia administers the state's domestic violence programs based on the wrongful belief that only men can be batterers and only women can be victims, finding "The practical effect of this rule is to exclude adult and adolescent males from their statutory right to safety and security free from domestic violence for no reason other than their gender."

The cavalier and parochial behavior of West Virginia's Family Violence Prevention Services Board, their usurpation of the intent of the West Virginia Legislature, and the lack of legal authority in which they have

*Dedicated to the removal of harmful gender based stereotypes against men and boy.
Letter to Jennifer Kaplan*

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operated constitutes egregious maladministration and malfeasance.

Simply put, the West Virginia debacle creates a strong appearance of insidious corruption, an appearance the domestic violence industry can well do without.

The federal government must thoroughly investigate the Family Violence Prevention Services Board, affect corrective action, and *ensure* and *enforce* the gender neutrality requirement as a *condition* of providing continuing funding for domestic violence programs in West Virginia.

The Board's provincial awarding of contracts to a select few of ideologically acceptable service providers reeks of power and control cronyism. The federal government should immediately order the Family Violence Prevention Services Board to open its membership to all interested parties. Any interested group should be able to apply and receive fair examination and consideration of their proposals. The award process must be above reproach and void of favoritism.

This devastating ruling against the Family Violence Prevention Services Board questions whether the Board and recipient members have violated their federal contracts. Such violations of similar federal contracts would automatically trigger federal compliance audits, if not Congressional hearings.

Regardless, it will come as no surprise if the Family Violence Prevention Services Board disbands and surfaces under another name to avoid further scrutiny, if not liability. In which case, all recommendations above must still apply and federal compliance should be rigorously enforced.

The problems found in West Virginia are widespread. Similar lawsuits are pending in other jurisdictions and will soon focus on the misconduct of similar ideologically driven unconstitutional programs and confabs.

An assessment of the national Family Violence Prevention and Services Program found program accountability to be only 7% among its grant recipients, perhaps like West Virginia's Family Violence Prevention Services Board. One problem is the FVPSP seldom requires meaningful monitoring of grant recipients, recipients which generally share the same gender biased attitude against men as West Virginia's failed Family Violence Prevention Services Board.

Accordingly, we ask that all domestic violence programs recognized or funded by, through, or with the assistance of the federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Program be immediately reviewed and held accountable to the highest of standards, including providing the same and equal treatment and services to those in need regardless of gender.

It matters not how many men or women are abused, only that the abused receive proper assistance.

It's hoped your legacy will show concern for all victims, to do otherwise will have history treating you other than you may wish.

Sincerely,

Harry Crouch
President

Copies to: Director Catherine Pierce and Others

This request is endorsed by:

A Voice for Men
Family Rights And Many Ending Discrimination (FRAMED)
Get Your Justice Live
Men and Women Against Discrimination
Men's Defense Association
Men's Health Australia, Greg Andresen
Mens News Daily
Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting (RADAR)
Washington Civil Rights Council
Washington Shared Parenting

- David Heleniak, Esq. notes, *From my observations, the ruling ideology behind the current domestic violence system seems to be an unfortunate combination of 1870's Victorian chivalry and 1970's feminist animosity toward men.*
- *The Men's Defense Association further requests that the OVW change*

its name and orientation to reflect concern about violence against both sexes.

Richard Doyle, President.

- *Dear Mr. Crouch,*

I have received a request from Mr. John Lucas of your organization for an endorsement of your letter to Jennifer Kaplan of the Office of Violence Against Women. After reviewing that letter I am writing to offer my wholehearted support.

I worked for many years in the provision of treatment services for alcohol and drug abusers in Houston, Texas. As I am sure you are aware, that population has a much higher incidence of domestic violence.

It was my professional experience that referring men who were victims of domestic abuse to support services was often frustrating and non productive. There were, in effect, no real services provided for men.

The same was true when seeking intervention on women whom I discovered to be perpetrators of violence in their homes. Because the problem of domestic violence has been largely framed as male only, it has actually fostered a hardened resistance to acknowledging and addressing female perpetrators. This leaves victims, and frequently their children, openly vulnerable.

The solution for this, as you have well addressed in your important letter, is to cease gender profiling in the matter of domestic violence, subsequently promoting efforts to address victims and perpetrators regardless of sex. It is a long overdue idea mandated by the wealth of empirical studies that support such a new direction.

Regards,

*Paul Elam
Editor-in-Chief
Men's News Daily*

- Dear Mr. Crouch,

I received a request from Mr. John Lucas to endorse your letter to Jennifer Kaplan of the Office of Violence Against Women to be delivered October 18, 2009. After my personal review of the letter I am providing this letter of support, of which may be forwarded along with the original.

“It matters not how many men or women are abused, only that the abused receive proper assistance” could not be a truer statement. As I have been personally reviewing federally supported grant and incentive programs and their subsequent state mandates throughout the United States *it is imperative that*

- *Program accountability is achieved with widespread public comment regarding creation, management, and community participation not simply federal directives.*
- *Programs are operated without preferences of age, gender, marital status, race, and other forms of discriminatory practices that result in actual cases of abuse where the abused are unable to receive sufficient services.*
- *Programs must remain transparent to the general public on the basis of administrative expenditures, program success, and program failures so as to provide public awareness and measurements that will allow continued improvements.*

As I have reviewed the three-page letter, I believe it sufficiently represents the public’s interest to encourage government to better scrutinize the spending of tax dollars and to further streamline efficiencies that treat all groups in a nondiscriminatory manner without respect to age, gender, marital status, and race.

Sincerely,

/s/ /s/

*Lary Holland
President
Get Your Justice Live*