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National and Local Legislation: Stay Updated

DCCESV maintains charts tracking proposed and passed legislation of concern to members and stakeholders, including issue areas affecting women, children, sexual assault, and more. For the most recent version of our local and national legislation tracking charts, visit dcesv.org.

H.R. 5706: The Stop Sexual Assault and Harassment in Transportation Act

Last month, Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR) introduced a bill to enact stricter policies to protect passengers and personnel from sexual assault and harassment in transportation. The Stop Sexual Assault and Harassment in Transportation Act will help prevent sexual assaults and sexual harassment on airplanes, buses, passenger vessels, commuter and intercity passenger railroads, taxis, and ridesharing vehicles. This legislation will require transportation providers to establish formal policies against sexual assault and harassment and to facilitate the reporting of sexual assault and harassment incidents. The bill also establishes civil penalties for individuals who perpetrate these incidents and creates a data collection program within the Department of Transportation to inform the public of the potential risks they face during travel.

Expressing her support for the bill, Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director of [Rights4Girls](https://rights4girls.org), said "[r]ecent and disturbing incidents of sexual violence on major transportation services dictate a more robust response to address and ultimately prevent violence against women across the transportation industry. The *Stop Sexual Assault and Harassment in Transportation Act* will help ensure the safety of women and girls across all transportation sectors by promoting the adoption of formal protocols, increased and targeted training for transportation employees and data tracking, and greater transparency to help keep women

safe from violence and harassment across our entire transportation system. We thank Chair DeFazio for his leadership on this legislation and look forward to seeing it become law.”

To learn more about the Stop Sexual Assault and Harassment in Transportation Act, read the full press release [here](#).

Organization Spotlight: Network for Victim Recovery of DC



This quarter, DCCESV is proud to recognize the Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC), a nonprofit organization that empowers victims of all crimes to achieve survivor-defined justice through a collaborative continuum of advocacy, case management and legal services.

Starting in 2012, the NVRDC founders sought to create an organization dedicated to providing a seamless network of referrals and services to all DC crime victims. NVRDC provides free, holistic, and comprehensive resources to help survivors navigate the aftermath of a crime. They support crime victims in the District of Columbia by meeting them where they are and, in doing so, provide vital services in order to achieve justice and encourage self-determination.

NVRDC co-runs the advocacy portion of DC’s Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program, which supports a coordinated community response for survivors. This includes hotline services, free transportation to and from the hospital, hospital advocacy, entry into therapeutic services, and referrals to legal services. Staff attorneys at NVRDC provide direct representation in civil protection orders (CPO) cases and Title IX administrative proceedings; in criminal court, they zealously defend victims’ rights throughout the entire criminal justice process. NVRDC also organizes a variety of special projects, including the Victim Legal Network of DC ([VLNDC](#)), Elder Justice Initiatives (including the District’s Collaborative Training & Response for Older Victims ([DC TROV](#))), Rights in Systems Enforced ([RISE](#)) Project, Support & Legal Advocacy for Youth ([SLAY](#)) Team, and the Identity Theft Assistance Project ([ITAP](#)).

NVRDC welcomes all survivors of crime, regardless of sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, income status, race and ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, country of origin, and ability. The organization is committed to ensuring that all survivors of crime have a welcoming place to go in order to learn of their rights and enjoy a supportive and empowering environment as they process their experiences and determine how to respond to the crime.

The staff at NVRDC reaches out to community-based organizations, faith-based communities, law firms, businesses, and government agencies to get assistance. By strengthening DC’s safety net for crime victims, NVRDC assists in rebuilding families, communities, and the nation’s capital.

To learn more about the Network for Victim Recovery of DC, how you can support their work, and available resources, visit <https://www.nvrdc.org>.

October was Domestic Violence Awareness Month

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, here are 10 tips to have an informed conversation about Domestic Violence from the [National Network to End Domestic Violence](#):

1. NEVER blame the victim.
2. Hold offenders accountable.
3. Challenge widely-held perceptions about domestic violence.
4. Voice that domestic violence is an intersectional issue.
5. Understand that abuse is rooted in power and control.
6. Trust the survivor's perspective.
7. Question the way the media portrays domestic violence.
8. Communicate that domestic violence is **not** a "private, family matter."
9. Root your conversation in equality.
10. Remember domestic violence affects all of us, but with action and education we can end it.

For more details about each tip, read the full article [here](#).

Upcoming Survivor Support Groups

Beginning this month, the [DC Rape Crisis Center](#) is offering two new support groups for survivors of sexual violence:

Experiences of Healing — Tuesdays 6:30pm-8:30pm starting November 30th

Virtual support group, open to all genders over the age of 18 who have experienced sexual abuse as a child. This 14-week support group will facilitate the exploration of the different aspects of the healing process while developing tools to better cope with the impact of trauma.

Reclaiming Ourselves — Thursdays 6:30pm-8:30pm starting December 2nd

Virtual support group, open to all genders over the age of 18 who have experienced sexual assault as an adult and are interested in focusing on their adult sexual assault at this time. Through facilitated topics, this 12-week psycho-educational support group will encourage members to discuss how their sexual assault has affected them and their healing process.

Prior counseling experience is not required to participate in either group. Please be aware that an intake is required for determining group readiness before participation can be confirmed. **Deadline to complete**

an intake is November 17, 2021. Contact Rubi at the DC Rape Crisis Center (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) at 202-470-1188 for more information and to schedule an intake.

November Book Recommendation

[Upstream: The Quest to Solve Problems Before They Happen by Dan Heath](#)

“So often in life, we get stuck in a cycle of response. We put out fires. We deal with emergencies. We stay downstream, handling one problem after another, but we never make our way upstream to fix the systems that caused the problems. Cops chase robbers, and doctors treat patients with chronic diseases, and call-center reps address customer complaints. But crime and chronic disease and customer complaints are preventable! So why do our efforts skew so heavily toward reaction rather than prevention?”

Upstream explores the psychological forces that push us downstream—including “problem blindness,” which can leave us oblivious to serious problems in our midst. And Heath introduces us to the thinkers who have overcome these obstacles and scored massive victories by switching to an upstream mindset. One online travel website prevented 20 million customer service calls every year by making some simple tweaks to its booking system. A major urban school district cut its dropout rate in half after it figured out that it could predict which students would drop out—as early as the ninth grade. A European nation almost eliminated teenage alcohol and drug abuse by deliberately changing the nation’s culture. And one EMS system accelerated the emergency-response time of its ambulances by using data to predict where 911 calls would emerge—and forward-deploying its ambulances to stand by in those areas!

Upstream delivers practical solutions for preventing problems rather than simply reacting to them. How many problems in our lives and in society are we tolerating simply because we’ve forgotten that we can fix them?”

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