

113<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 5538

To establish a grant program to empower relatives, friends, and co-workers of domestic violence victims to create safety plans.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To establish a grant program to empower relatives, friends, and co-workers of domestic violence victims to create safety plans.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Domestic Violence  
5       Safety Plan Grant Program Act of 2014” or as the “My  
6       Sister’s Keeper Act of 2014”.

7       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8       The Congress finds as follows:

9               (1) Approximately 1 in 4 women will experience  
10       domestic violence during her lifetime and every year,

1 1 in 3 women who is a victim of homicide is mur-  
2 dered by her current or former partner.

3 (2) Every year, more than 3 million children  
4 witness domestic violence in their homes and chil-  
5 dren who live in homes where there is domestic vio-  
6 lence also suffer abuse or neglect at high rates.

7 (3) Children are more likely to intervene when  
8 they witness severe violence against a parent, which  
9 places them at great risk for injury or even death.

10 (4) Girls who witness domestic violence are  
11 more vulnerable to abuse as teens and adults and  
12 boys who witness domestic violence are more likely  
13 to become adult abusers of their partners, their chil-  
14 dren, or both, thus continuing the cycle of violence  
15 in the next generation.

16 (5) Most domestic violence incidents are never  
17 reported.

18 (6) Family members, close friends, co-workers,  
19 and other persons close to a victim of domestic vio-  
20 lence frequently observe things that lead to them to  
21 suspect that their loved one or colleague is being  
22 abused but do not feel they possess the knowledge  
23 and skills needed to provide constructive assistance  
24 that can make a real difference in the life of the vic-  
25 tim.

1           (7) Domestic violence costs the national econ-  
2           omy more than \$37 billion a year in law enforce-  
3           ment involvement, legal work, medical and mental  
4           health treatment, and lost productivity.

5 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO DISCOURAGE DOMESTIC VIO-**  
6 **LENCE.**

7           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall estab-  
8           lish a program to award grants to eligible State and local  
9           governments, educational institutions, and non-profit or-  
10          ganizations to develop, promote, and teach the importance  
11          of the critical role that can be played by relatives, friends,  
12          and co-workers in combating domestic violence.

13          (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
14          are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of the  
15          grant program under this section \$5,000,000 for each of  
16          fiscal years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

17          (c) SUNSET.—The provisions of this section shall  
18          cease to have effect beginning on the last day of fiscal  
19          year 2019.

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