



"Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting"

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RE: House Resolution 590 Regarding National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Honorable George Miller and Howard McKeon:

In our August 18 letter to you, we expressed our concern that most of the statements contained in HRES 590 are one-sided, misleading, or even false. Our Analysis of the resolution can be found here: www.mediadar.org/docs/RADARanalysis-HRES590.pdf .

Shortly after we sent you that letter, we learned of a recent study from the federal Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/cpr/abstract/97/5/941 . This research sheds light on the problem of domestic violence – see summary on the back of this letter. The CDC study found:

1. In half of the cases, partner violence was unilateral. Women were the perpetrators in 7 out of 10 cases, and men were the perpetrators in 3 out of 10 incidents.
2. In the other half of the cases, both persons engaged in the violence.
3. *Self-defense was rarely the cause for partner violence.* As the CDC report notes, “studies of community samples found that a relatively low percentage of women endorsed self-defense as a primary motive for violence.”

In acute contrast to the CDC study and the findings of over 200 scholarly investigations, HRES 590 conveys the baseless impression that domestic violence is instigated solely by men. That unfairly stereotypes and stigmatizes men, and *precludes abusive women from getting the help they need.* According to the DoJ National Survey on Violence Against Women, over 800,000 women physically assault their husbands and boyfriends each year.

RADAR and its 80 affiliate organizations are strongly committed to our nation’s campaign to stop domestic violence – but these programs should be based on solid research and proven treatments. Programs that are rooted in ideology and myth may end up causing far more harm than good.

We urge the Committee on Education and Labor to take no action on this flawed Resolution.

Sincerely,

Mark Rosenthal
President

cc: Members of the House of Representatives