

**LANHAM, MD** – In recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) attended a briefing today with the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence to discuss an innovative approach the organization developed to reduce violence. They also discussed the need to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, which Congressman Hoyer has been calling on the House to address by passing the Senate's bipartisan bill.

“During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we must recommit ourselves to ending violence against women and improving the support we provide to its victims here in Maryland and across the country,” **stated Congressman Hoyer**. “The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence is leading efforts in our state and I commend them for their innovative approach to identify domestic violence victims and connect them with those who can help.”

“Congress must also do its part to end domestic violence,” **continued Congressman Hoyer**. “I was a proud cosponsor of the original Violence Against Women Act in 1994, and I continue to call on the House to take up a bipartisan reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act that passed the Senate so we can continue to provide the resources needed to prosecute those who commit acts of violence against women, as well as the resources needed to help victims heal and move forward.”

The bipartisan reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act passed by the Senate provides grants to support state, tribal and local efforts to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking; funds collaborations between victim service providers, law enforcement, prosecutors and judges to address these crimes in a comprehensive manner; and includes protections for immigrants, tribal women, and victims in the LGBT community. The bill contains provisions strongly supported by law enforcement and advocates for victims of domestic violence, and passed with a bipartisan vote of 68-31.

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence is a state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals who work to reduce intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects. The Network provides education, training, resources, and advocacy to advance victim safety and abuser accountability. The Network briefed Congressman Hoyer on their Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), which has helped bring down intimate partner homicides in Maryland by 40 percent since its implementation. The program identifies victims of domestic violence and immediately connects them to the domestic violence service providers in their area.