

If President Trump needs an Emergency, domestic violence victim advocates in Wisconsin suggest an option based in reality.

MADISON - Domestic violence victim advocates across Wisconsin are speaking out to refute President Trump's fraudulent claims of an immigration crisis that warrants a "national emergency." Instead of making potentially unconstitutional decrees based on misinformation to build an unnecessary and xenophobic wall, advocates are recommending that the President take steps to address an issue that affects one third of all women at some point in their lifetime: intimate partner violence.



"The ultimate irony of President Trump's ridiculous decision to declare a national emergency because of immigration related concerns is that a great majority of the families entering the United States at the Southern border are doing so in order to flee violence and instability often created by US foreign policy," said Patti Seger, executive director of End Domestic Abuse WI. "Undocumented immigrants commit crimes at much lower rates than native-born US citizens. Additionally, undocumented and refugee victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and

trafficking are at greater risk of harm than those victims with full citizenship because of the precarious situation they find themselves in upon entering the US."

In addition to President Trump's declaration of a national emergency, Congress passed a funding resolution last week to dramatically increase border security. Included in the resolution is $1.375 billion for a physical barrier (a total of 55 miles), an 11% increase in funding for 45,274 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention beds, and more enforcement agents which advocates report will only serve to increase fear for immigrant families and discourage victims from reporting serious abuse to authorities. The funding resolution and national emergency declaration come on the heels of several other immigration related changes from the Trump administration in November of last year. Those changes include a new policy subjecting minors as well as victims of human trafficking, domestic violence and sexual assault who applied for, but were denied, protective status to deportation (a policy that was historically viewed as inhumane). Further changes in longstanding immigration practice included a new ban on asylum for anyone who enters the U.S. anywhere except at a port of entry, a move that flies in the face of U.S. law established by Congress decades ago and jeopardizes the safety of numerous vulnerable families who are lawfully seeking out protection from persecution and violence.

"We are extremely disappointed to see Congress legitimize the President's extensive pattern of scapegoating and xenophobia by increasing border security funding. If our elected officials need an emergency to focus on, maybe they should consider the real violence being inflicted on victims of domestic and sexual violence in our country every day," continued Seger. "Demonizing refugee families who are fleeing violence will not make anyone safer, it will only ensure that undocumented and immigrant victims of crime remain in the shadows while abusers continue their violent behavior unimpeded."

President Trump signed the resolution, approved by Congress, on Friday of last week to fund the government, preventing a new shutdown which was set to begin on Saturday, February 16, 2019.

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End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the leading voice for victims of domestic abuse in Wisconsin. At End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, we educate shelter and program volunteers and advocates, law enforcement, legislators, and

community members to provide safety and support to survivors. We strive to shift Wisconsin from the attitudes and beliefs that cause domestic violence to values of mutual respect and equality, and we partner with communities in the effort to prevent and end domestic abuse.

We encourage reporters to include the National Domestic Violence Hotline number 1–800–799–SAFE (7233) in their stories for victims who need help. A list of local Wisconsin domestic violence victim service providers can be found at http://www.endabusewi.org.