Senator Dick Durbin
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Tammy Duckworth
524 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

YWCA Associations Urge Full Funding for Crucial Federal Programs
Supporting Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in Illinois

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing 14 YWCA associations across the state of Illinois, we respectfully urge you to provide full funding in FY20 for crucial federal programs that support survivors of gender-based violence in Illinois. This includes the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) and programs authorized through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA). Such funding streams are critical in our efforts to address the epidemic of gender-based violence and help Illinois women and families build the safety, stability, and security they need to achieve their full potential.

YWCA is the largest network of domestic and sexual assault services providers in the country. In Illinois, 14 YWCAs serve over 300,000 women, girls, and families each year through innovative and often life-saving programs that range from emergency shelter and affordable childcare to water safety instruction and financial literacy education. YWCA associations invest over $45 million dollars into Illinois annually and have been serving the residents of this state for over 145 years. This work – while expansive – can only continue if certain, critical federal funding streams are protected and fully resourced. In particular, we urge you as our members of Congress to ensure that in FY20:

- VAWA is fully funded at $871 million;¹
- The VOCA cap is set at an average of the past 3 years’ deposits into the VOCA account;²
- CDBG is funded at $3.8 billion, at minimum; and

¹ Including at least $15 million towards the Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies
² And maintain the tribal funding stream within VOCA
- FVPSA is fully funded at $175 million.

YWCAs in Illinois rely on federal grants through CDBG, VAWA, VOCA, and FVPSA to support survivors of gender-based violence and to build – and maintain – healthy communities that thrive. Today, we urge you to ensure that these and other life-sustaining programs are fully funded in FY20.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Leslie Lina Paluch, Policy and Advocacy Manager at YWCA Evanston/North Shore, at (847) 864-8445 or lpaluch@ywca-ens.org.

Sincerely,

YWCA Evanston/North Shore
YWCA Kankakee
YWCA McLean County
YWCA of the Sauk Valley
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago
YWCA Canton
YWCA Elgin
YWCA Lake County
YWCA of the University of Illinois
YWCA Northwestern Illinois
YWCA Quincy
YWCA of Alton
YWCA of the Quad Cities
YWCA Pekin

Cc: Representative Bobby Rush (1st District)
Representative Robin Kelly (2nd District)
Representative Dan Lipinski (3rd District)
Representative Jesús "Chuy" García (4th District)
Representative Michael Quigley (5th District)
Representative Sean Casten (6th District)
Representative Danny K. Davis (7th District)
Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi (8th District)
Representative Jan Schakowsky (9th District)
Representative Brad Schneider (10th District)
Representative Bill Foster (11th District)
Representative Mike Bost (12th District)
Representative Rodney L. Davis (13th District)
Representative Lauren Underwood (14th District)
Representative John Shimkus (15th District)
Representative Adam Kinzinger (16th District)
Representative Cheri Bustos (17th District)
Representative Darin LaHood (18th District)