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**PAUL D. TONKO**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
20<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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March 16, 2022

The Honorable Merrick E. Garland  
U.S. Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C., 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write in support of the application from In Our Own Voices to the Office on Violence Against Women Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program. The requested funding will be used to provide advocacy and civil legal services for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking in New York's Capital Region.

In Our Own Voices offers comprehensive, wrap-around services to members of the LGBTQ community in Albany, Colombia, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties. This includes emergency assistance, information and referrals, counseling, case management, advocacy, support groups, court accompaniment, legal referrals, HIV and Hepatitis C testing, assistance with filing New York Office of Victim Services claims, and more.

If awarded funding, In Our Own Voices will partner with the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York to provide advocacy and civil legal services to urban and rural victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. The aim of this partnership will be to enhance community coordination, help reduce domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking in the region, and increase the safety of survivors during recovery.

Like you, I am committed to reducing violence against women and strengthening services to victims. Your full and fair consideration of this request, consistent with current laws, rules, regulations, and agency policy, is appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Tonko".

PAUL D. TONKO  
Member of Congress

PDT/npl