Rules Committee Testimony
Congresswoman Gwen Moore

- I am here to offer the Senate-passed version of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as an amendment in the nature of a substitute, along with two esteemed colleagues: House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member John Conyers and House Rules Committee Ranking Member Louise Slaughter. Both of them have been long-time leaders on the issue of domestic violence and sexual assault.

- The three of us have stood ready to work with House leadership on this issue and have reached out across the aisle many times.

- The legislation we are offering won by a vote of 78 to 22 in the Senate. As you are aware, that kind of bipartisan vote is a rare demonstration of the strength and need for a bill.

- I know there are many members of the House, in both political parties, who truly want to find common ground and find a way forward on VAWA.

    - Two of them—Congressmen Tom Cole and Darrell Issa—have done remarkable work to reach a compromise on the tribal provisions.
    - And we know they are not alone. VAWA has many champions, from all corners of the country, and all walks of life.

- The Senate bill is a noteworthy accomplishment for several reasons. It represents the input of all groups of relevant stakeholders, and several rounds of compromises on both sides.
    - This bill is supported by over 1300 domestic and sexual violence organizations.
    - It provides coverage for immigrant, Native American, LGBT, and college women.

- It includes amendments that were added in the process of final Senate passage that have added imperative protections for human trafficking victims, and a measure that would help us to reduce the backlog of untested rape kits across the country.

- I am proud to be here today, representing this legislation. I introduced the House version of the Senate bill (H.R. 11) along with Rep. Conyers—minus the trafficking and rape kit provisions that were added later, on the Senate floor—and that bill now has over 200 cosponsors.

- This new iteration of the House bill, on the other hand, falls short in almost every way:
  - It strips out protections for LGBT victims;
  - It does not adequately protect tribal victims;
  - It does not help us keep campus women safe;
  - It omits key protections for immigrant victims;
  - It eliminates provisions to help us to solve rape cases;
  - And it deletes provisions for victims of human trafficking.

- There is a great deal of opposition to the House bill, both on and off the Hill. On the other hand, if we brought the Senate bill to a vote, we know we would have the support to pass it expediently.

- Any delay in passage of this bill simply delays our efforts to get help to victims.

- It is not too late for us to come together to pass a meaningful VAWA. I urge you to bring the true Senate VAWA bill to the House floor for a vote as soon as possible.