

Resolution 2

In Support of Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators have, in previous resolutions, expressed their support for efforts to address the problem of violence against women in our society; and

WHEREAS, the Conferences, by bringing together Chief Justices and State Court Administrators, have contributed to the implementation of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) by supporting education programs, technical assistance, and information sharing that meets the needs of individual states; and

WHEREAS, Congress has over the years authorized and appropriated federal funds to assist states in implementing the VAWA provisions; and

WHEREAS, in prior reauthorization legislation, Congress specifically recognized the important role of courts and added “state and local courts” as eligible grantees for STOP grants and grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders, established a 5% set-aside in the STOP grant for State courts, and created grant programs specifically targeted at assisting state courts to provide training for judges and court personnel and to implement court improvements; and

WHEREAS, state courts have effectively used the federal grant funds to implement improved practices and procedures and other system reforms; and

WHEREAS, while there has been improvement over time, some state courts continue to have difficulty in accessing the 5% set-aside in the STOP grant; and

WHEREAS, legislation, including the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011 (S. 1925), has been introduced in the 112th Congress to reauthorize VAWA through fiscal year 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators support the continuation of the 5% set-aside within the STOP grant and the training and court improvements funds to assist state courts to more effectively address domestic violence cases; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences encourage Congress to ensure that state courts are able to access the federal grant funds specifically targeted to assist state courts, including providing funds directly to state courts when the purpose of the funds is to assist state courts to implement the provisions of VAWA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences support efforts by Congress to increase collaboration by requiring grantees to consult and coordinate with stakeholders, including state

and local courts, in the planning and distribution of formula grant funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences urge Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act and provide sufficient federal funding to support the goals and objectives of the Act.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Courts, Children and Families Committee at the 2012 Midyear Meeting on February 1, 2012.