

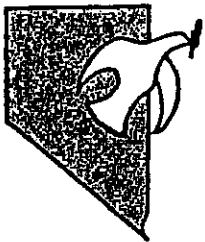
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## *Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence*

March 4, 2003

Assembly Ways and Means Sub-Committee  
K-12/Human Resources  
Nevada State Assembly  
Legislative Building  
Carson City, NV 89710

Members of the Sub-Committee;

My name is Susan Meuschke. I am the Executive Director of the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV), the statewide coalition of domestic violence programs in Nevada. I am here today to speak in favor of funding for support services to recipients of TANF Funds including domestic violence services and training.

The enactment of welfare reform in 1997, which promoted itself as reducing dependence and increasing self-sufficiency through creating incentives for moving from welfare to work, raised many concerns. One of the cautions that were raised during the initial debate was what would happen if the economy suffered a down-turn? The economy has and the result is in front of us today. The increasing case loads and the decreasing revenues from all sources are forcing you to consider reducing or deleting the positive incentives created to help move folks from welfare to work leaving us with the negative incentives and the woefully inadequate monthly allocation for recipients.

I am here to plead the case for retaining funding for services and training on domestic violence with the clear understanding that these are not the only services needed by recipients. One of the barriers to self-sufficiency experienced by many TANF recipients is violence in the home. Abusers use violence to sabotage their victims' attempts to move from welfare to work.

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To overcome this barrier, domestic violence programs throughout Nevada have received funding from the Division to provide services (shelter, peer counseling, support groups, etc.) to TANF recipients who are also experiencing domestic violence. These funds have been used by programs to expand current services and develop new programs to meet both the increased demand and respond to the unique needs of this population. Last spring, the Division notified all sub-contractors that contracts might have to be cut by up to 75% due to increasing caseloads and by the Fall, contracts were actually cut by 25%. In a recent e-mail survey I asked domestic violence programs to describe the net effect of these funding cuts.

- In Washoe County – for one program it impacted their ability to operate their shelter (utilities, food, personal items, diapers, etc.) For another program it meant reduction in shelter stays, reduced staffing for children's programs, and reduced food and transportation expenditures
- In Lyon County - the program reduced assistance for rent and utility deposits and are considering the reduction of current staffing by a half time position. (They only have three full time employees)
- In Elko County – it meant not filling an empty staff position, reduced shelter stays, and eliminating or reducing other support services.

The bottom line is that it had a significant impact. Further cuts, linked to all the other decreasing funding sources could set us back in terms of our ability to meet the existing demand for services much less respond to any increase in demand. Over the period FY 1997 – FY 2002 individuals seeking services from domestic violence programs have increased by 49% and while not all of that increase is linked to TANF, it has been a part of it and TANF funding has enabled programs to meet the demand.

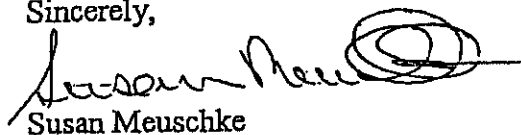
Our ability to provide training has also been affected. During the 1999 session Assemblyman Williams, having identified the need to train TANF workers on how to screen, identify and refer victims of domestic violence, sponsored a bill to provide funds

to develop and implement such a curriculum. Over that biennium, the Network developed a comprehensive curriculum and undertook training of more than 300 eligibility workers. We also developed specialized training for Social Workers who are charged with working directly with victims. As a direct result of that training the Division experienced a 48% increase in disclosures and more importantly a 72% increase in referrals to local service providers. Given the high employee turnover and the complexity of the issue, training is another critical and yet often overlooked need. Funding for training has also been reduced and will impact our ability to continue this project.

We understand the difficult financial times in which we live and are aware of the hard decisions facing this Legislature. However, we will still ask you to remember the promises that were made in 1997 to support those with the least, in moving from dependence towards self-sufficiency. If you require recipients to move from welfare to work in two years and yet cut all support services then that movement, for many victims of domestic violence, will be from welfare to the streets or back to the abusive relationship.

I thank you for your time and attention to this testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have for me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Meuschke", with a large, stylized circular flourish at the end.

Susan Meuschke

Executive Director, NNADV

P.S. I have attached a report showing the increases referenced above. I apologize for the limited time span, the individual who was collecting the data at the Division left her position and I don't believe it was ever filled.

## *Monthly Reports from the Welfare Division on Domestic Violence Assessments & Referrals*

Yellow shading indicate reported numbers prior to training from NNADV staff. Purple shading indicates reported numbers following NNADV's training of Welfare Division staff.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number of Disclosures</i>	<i>Good Cause Waivers Granted</i>	<i>Referrals for Advocacy</i>	<i>Referrals for Shelter</i>
November 1999	26	9	16	0
December 1999	38	4	18	9
January 2000	30	3	8	14
February 2000	45	4	37	13
March 2000	73	3	33	38
April 2000	42	6	29	9
May 2000	62	11	38	21
June 2000	49	0	24	20
July 2000	55	16	40	23
August 2000	66	17	43	14
September 2000	76	18	43	19
October 2000	89	30	61	17
November 2000	53	9	27	15
AVE. Before Training	46 per month	5 per month	25 per month	16 per month
AVE. After Training	68 per month	18 per month	43 per month	18 per month
Percentage Increased	48%	260%	72%	13%

# Las Vegas Offices

## --Training Dates, and Disclosure & Referral Summaries

Training Conducted	Month	# of Disclosures	# of Good Cause Waivers Granted	Referrals: Advocacy	Referrals: Shelter
	November 1999	15	3	11	0
	December 1999	20	2	12	6
	January 2000	17	3	4	7
	February 2000	17	2	12	3
	March 2000	36	3	13	26
	April 2000	20	0	14	7
	May 2000	23	9	20	10
	June 2000	34	0	17	17
	MONTHLY AVE.	22.75	2.75	12.9	9.5
37 trained	July 2000	40	16	32	21
	August 2000	45	14	33	8
	September 2000	48	21	25	12
87 trained	October 2000	54	27	36	7
	November 2000	14	4	9	5
	MONTHLY AVE.	46.75	16.4	27	11

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# Carson City, Yerington Offices

## Training Dates, and Disclosure & Referral Summaries

Training Conducted	Month	# of Disclosures	# of Good Cause Waivers Granted	Referrals: Advocacy	Referrals: Shelter
	November 1999	3	2	2	0
	December 1999	3	0	1	0
	January 2000	3	0	1	0
	February 2000	2	0	1	0
	March 2000	8	0	4	0
	April 2000	4	2	0	0
	May 2000	6	1	0	0
	June 2000	3	0	0	0
	July 2000	3	0	3	0
	MONTHLY AVE.	3.9	.56	1.7	0
26 trained	August 2000	6	3	4	1
	September 2000	7	0	3	2
	October 2000	10	0	6	3
	November 2000	9	2	4	3
	MONTHLY AVE.	8	1.25	4.25	2.25

# Reno Offices--Training Dates, and Disclosure & Referral Summaries

Training Conducted	Month	# of Disclosures	# of Good Cause Waivers Granted	Referrals: Advocacy	Referrals: Shelter
	November 1999	0	0	0	0
	December 1999	8	2	3	2
	January 2000	5	0	0	5
	February 2000	12	2	8	4
	March 2000	19	0	8	11
	April 2000	8	1	7	2
	May 2000	25	1	13	9
	June 2000	8	0	4	1
	MONTHLY AVE.	10.6	.75	5.4	4.3
16 trained	July 2000	12	0	5	2
50 trained	August 2000	14	0	4	3
	September 2000	10	1	8	3
	October 2000	6	1	6	2
30 trained	November 2000	12	3	7	0
	MONTHLY AVE.	10.8	1	6	2



## Elko, Ely, Winnemucca--Training Dates, and Disclosure & Referral Summaries

Training Conducted	Month	# of Disclosures	# of Good Cause Waivers Granted	Referrals: Advocacy	Referrals: Shelter
	November 1999	4	1	0	0
	December 1999	1	0	1	1
	January 2000	3	0	3	2
	February 2000	8	0	5	2
	March 2000	5	0	4	0
	April 2000	2	0	1	2
	May 2000	4	0	2	1
	June 2000	3	0	3	2
	July 2000	0	0	0	0
	August 2000	2	0	2	2
	MONTHLY AVE.	4	.13	2.6	1.5
20 trained	September 2000	5	0	7	2
	October 2000	11	2	11	5
	November 2000	7	0	7	7
	MONTHLY AVE.	8	.67	8	4.6

# Fallon, Hawthorne Offices

## Training Dates, and Disclosure & Referral Summaries

Training Conducted	Month	# of Disclosures	# of Good Cause Waivers Granted	Referrals: Advocacy	Referrals: Shelter
	November 1999	1	0	0	0
	December 1999	6	0	1	0
	January 2000	2	0	0	0
	February 2000	6	0	1	2
	March 2000	5	0	4	1
	April 2000	8	0	7	1
	May 2000	4	0	3	1
	June 2000	0	0	0	0
	July 2000	0	0	0	0
	MONTHLY AVE.	3.55	0	1.77	.55
3 trained (with Carson City personnel)	August 2000	0	0	0	0
	September 2000	4	0	0	0
	October 2000	6	0	0	0
	November 2000	11	0	0	0
	MONTHLY AVE.	5.25	0	0	0