

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1306

September 15, 2008

Mr. Jeffery M. Leving, Esq.
Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood
19 South LaSalle Street, Suite 450
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Dear Mr. Leving:

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for responsible fatherhood. I appreciate hearing from you. I take seriously the thousands of letters, e-mails, and calls I receive daily from Illinois constituents like you, and I value your ideas and opinions. Please accept my apology for the delayed response.

I was proud to introduce S.1626, the Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act, which would strengthen low-income families by eliminating government barriers to healthy relationships and healthy marriages, fostering economic stability and cooperative parenting skills among low-income parents, and providing incentives to non-custodial parents to fulfill financial and emotional support responsibilities. Among other items, this legislation would provide funding for states to implement and evaluate public-private workforce and career development partnerships, court-supervised employment for fathers at risk of incarceration due to failure to make child support payments, and transitional jobs programs for ex-offenders and other disproportionately unemployed populations. It would also ensure equal funding for Responsible Fatherhood and Marriage Promotion Programs by increasing funding for activities promoting responsible fatherhood by \$50 million.

With regard to domestic violence, S. 1626 also would provide \$25 million a year for ~~partnerships between domestic violence prevention organizations and fatherhood or marriage~~ programs to train staff in domestic violence services. Additionally, the bill would provide resources to families affected by domestic violence, and would develop best practices in domestic violence prevention.

Domestic violence affects individuals from every walk of life. It is a very real and prevalent threat to women in our country. Tragically, one in four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. Family violence accounted for 11 percent of all violence between 1998 and 2002. The breadth of this problem is staggering, as we know that cases often go unreported. Congress must take an active role in providing victims of violence with the services necessary to rebuild their lives, and strengthen education and training programs to prevent the violence from happening in the first place. For these reasons and more, I was a

proud co-sponsor of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act in 2006, and will continue supporting legislation that assists all victims of abuse.

Mr. Leving, thank you again for writing. I hope you will continue to stay in touch.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama
United States Senator

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