

# Hope in Sight for Domestic & Sexual Violence Victims, Thanks to 1.9 Trillion COVID-19 American Rescue Plan

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, March 16, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ujima commends the passage of the \$1.9 Trillion COVID-19 [American Rescue Plan](#) as a major step to address the alarming rise in [domestic and sexual violence](#) cases in the Black community, exacerbated by the pandemic.

The plan, signed by President Biden Thursday, features several provisions to strengthen the safety net for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence, including nearly \$50 million focused specifically on survivors of color.

“Domestic and sexual violence cases rose significantly during the pandemic, and nowhere is that more evident than in the Black community, where women and children had already been experiencing higher rates of abuse and lethality,” said Ujima Executive Director Karma Cottman.

The American Rescue Plan Covid relief bill includes \$49.5 million earmarked for culturally specific programs servicing domestic and sexual violence victims.

The \$1.9 Trillion Covid relief bill also includes \$198 million for sexual assault services; \$180 million to support domestic violence organizations; \$1 million for the National Domestic Violence Hotline; \$1 million for the StrongHearts Native Helpline; and \$18 million for tribal responses to gender-based violence.

Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) were pivotal in helping to secure the additional resources.

“Far too often, culturally specific domestic and sexual violence programs servicing communities of color are left out of the equation when it comes to accessing needed resources. We commend the legislators that saw the importance of making sure that Black survivors were included in this



plan,” said Cottman. “The American Rescue Plan will not only help to curb some of the alarming domestic and sexual violence issues brought on by the pandemic, it also is a great starting point to addressing the longstanding disparities that have existed when it comes to helping survivors of color.”

#### About Ujima

Launched in 2015, Ujima is a national services issue resource center that provides support and serves as a voice for the Black Community in response to domestic, sexual and community violence. Ujima was founded in response to a need for an active approach to ending domestic, sexual and community violence in the Black community. The name Ujima was derived from the third principle of Kwanzaa and means Collective Work and Responsibility.

#### About Karma Cottman

Karma Cottman, the Executive Director of Ujima, is responsible for leading the national organization’s outreach efforts. Before joining Ujima, Inc., Karma led the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence as Executive Director for a decade. Prior to that, she served the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), for a decade.

For Interviews with Karma Cottman Contact: Toya Hankins with 6 Eleven Group at 877-611-4787 or [6elevengroup@gmail.com](mailto:6elevengroup@gmail.com)

Toya Hankins

6 Eleven Group

+1 877-611-4787

[email us here](#)

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