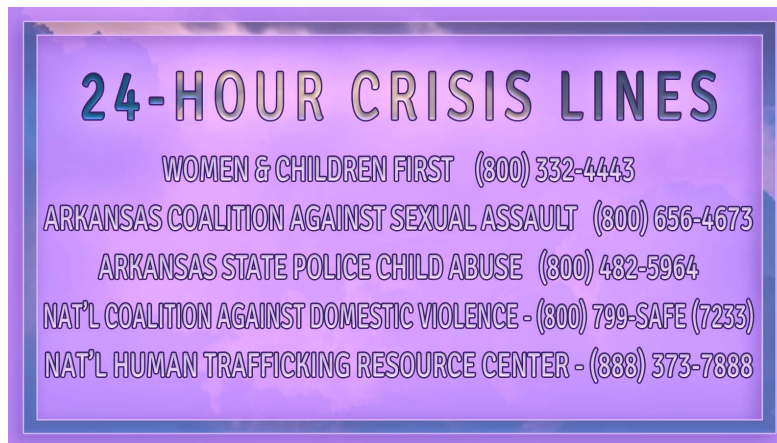




Arkansas House Newsletter

September 20, 2019

Ending Domestic Violence in Arkansas



In Arkansas, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men will be the victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime. In 2018, 44 Arkansas died as a result of domestic violence.

Domestic violence occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, region, ethnicity, educational level or race.

This week, a rally was held inside the Capitol to raise awareness as we approach Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. The Governor and legislators also recognized the work of the 32 domestic violence shelters across the state assisting 18,000 Arkansans last year.

Every year, we study ways to strengthen our domestic violence laws in an effort to reduce and eliminate this epidemic.

In the 2019 Regular Session we passed the following bills addressing domestic violence:

ACT 499 creates a privilege of communication between a victim of domestic violence and the personnel of a domestic violence shelter or center and makes confidential certain communications between a victim and a victim advocate.

Act 498 reconciles the differences between the offenses of domestic battering in the first degree and battery in the first degree and increases the penalties for battery offenses under certain circumstances.

Act 324 allows for an additional sentence of 1 to 10 years in prison if certain offenses are committed in the presence of a child. The offenses include murder, aggravated robbery, felony assault or battery, and rape. Domestic violence is the leading predictor of child abuse.

Act 113 helps ensure that the \$25 fee added to domestic violence convictions is directed to fund domestic violence shelters.

Act 908 amends the Arkansas code concerning orders of protection to align with federal code.

Domestic violence not only affects victims and families, it harms entire communities.

Below are numbers to 24-hour crisis lines:

Women and Children First – (800) 332-4443

Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault – (800) 656-4673

Arkansas State Police Child Abuse – (800) 482-5964

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence – (800) 799-SAFE (7233)

National Human Trafficking Resource Center – (888) 373-7888