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## **RI Dems criticize Doherty for his opposition to expanding the Violence Against Women Act**

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**Providence, RI** – In light of congressional candidate Brendan Doherty’s Women for Doherty rally tonight, the Rhode Island Democratic Party today questioned Doherty for not supporting legislation that would expand and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. Specifically, the Party questions Doherty’s unwillingness to expand and strengthen protections to Native American women, members of the LGBT community and immigrants.

On April 26, the Senate passed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (S.1925) by a vote of 68-31 that extended protections to Native Americans, undocumented immigrants and members of the LGBT community. Even though thirteen female senators, Republican and Democrat, called upon House Speaker John Boehner to pass the Senate’s legislation, the House GOP passed its own reauthorization that excluded these expanded protections. The VAWA expired without Congress reaching consensus and the Republican-led House left town without passing a strengthened, bipartisan VAWA reauthorization.

In comments published in a Sept. 16 column in the *Providence Journal*, Doherty would only voice his support for the Violence Against Women Act in its current version, but was unwilling to support legislation to also expand and strengthen protections for Native Americans, immigrants and members of the LGBT community. ***“If members of Congress want to add protections for people in other walks of life, that’s fine, but submit another bill,” Doherty told the Journal.***

“Brendan Doherty talks about being bipartisan and the need to compromise, but with his comments dismissing people ‘in other walks of life,’ he is siding with the Republican right, even though every Republican female senator, among several Republican senators, voted for a bipartisan compromise on this issue,” said Rhode Island Democratic Chairman Ed Pacheco. “We want to send a message to Mr. Doherty that actions speak louder than words.”

“As the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence launches their ‘No More’ campaign and given that October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month, now is a great time for Mr. Doherty to clearly explain his reservations about protecting some women, but not all women, from domestic violence,” Pacheco said. “The Democratic Party believes that protection should be extended to all women, and Senate Democrats, along with many Republicans, voted for that this spring. Most Americans understand that domestic violence is domestic violence – period – and it’s not a less important issue for any individual.

“Voters have every reason to be concerned about Mr. Doherty’s position on this important issue,” Pacheco concluded. “Unfortunately, Mr. Doherty has chosen to stand with the House Republican leadership above the needs of victims of domestic violence.”