Washington, D.C. – On Monday February 11th, Congressman Lee Terry and 16 Republican colleagues sent a letter to Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor urging the House of Representatives reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

The Violence Against Women Act was first signed into law in 1995 and subsequently reauthorized in 2000 and 2006. The legislation is a vital resource for communities and organizations that help victims of sexual abuse and violence. During the 112th Congress, both the House of Representatives and Senate passed their own versions of VAWA but no final legislation was presented for a vote in either chamber. The signatories of this letter believe this legislation should be advanced quickly to ensure the programs that rely up VAWA will not be put in jeopardy.

"As a strong supporter of its reauthorization in 2000 and 2006, I believe it is necessary to continue funding programs and organizations that assist women who are victims of domestic abuse, stalking, dating violence and sexual assault," Terry said. "Since its original enactment in 1995, the reporting rate of domestic violence has increased while the number of incidents have fallen. VAWA has had a positive affect on the lives of women by empowering them during the most frightening and dangerous situation they may ever face in their lifetime."

See the letter to Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor here .