



Representative Daniel Antonio Alvarez  
Chair, Criminal Justice Subcommittee  
404 House Office Building  
Tallahassee, FL

**RE: NASW-Florida Supports HB 19 – Victims of Domestic Violence and Dating Violence**

Dear Chair Alvarez,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers – Florida Chapter (NASW-FL), we write to express our strong support for HB 19: Victims of Domestic Violence and Dating Violence. As social workers, we work directly with survivors of domestic and dating violence, and we have seen firsthand the barriers they face when attempting to seek help. This bill takes a necessary step in expanding a critical, discreet avenue for survivors to reach law enforcement without alerting their abuser, potentially saving lives.

One of the most dangerous moments for a survivor is when they attempt to leave or seek help. The fear of retaliation, financial instability, and lack of immediate protection often force survivors to remain in dangerous situations. HB 19 would provide a secure, user-friendly platform that allows individuals in crisis to request assistance quickly and safely without drawing attention. Additionally, this bill strengthens the safety net by opening the door to more services and safety planning, ensuring survivors have access to the resources they need to break free from violence.

NASW-FL understands cost concerns, but a person's life should never be reduced to dollars and cents. The impact of domestic and dating violence extends far beyond the individual—it affects families, workplaces, and communities. The cost of inaction is far more significant when considering the long-term repercussions on survivors, children, and law enforcement responding to escalated crises.

Florida has a strong history of supporting survivors, and we are proud of our legislators' work to protect those in harm's way. Today, we ask for your support once again. We urge you and the members of the Criminal Justice Subcommittee to vote YES on HB 19 and help ensure that no one is left without a safe way to reach help when they need it most.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this critical issue. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional insight or support.

Sincerely,

Christina Cazanave-McCarthy, MSW  
Executive Director

Dr. Michael J. Alicea  
President

Pedro Serrano-Mejia, MSW  
Legislative Chair

**Advancing the profession and practice of social work in Florida**