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October 13, 2013

Congress passed the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) in part to prevent abused immigrant spouses who had entered into valid marriages in good faith, and their children, from being locked in abusive homes and relationships. The drafters of VAWA decided that analysis of domestic violence incidents under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations with regard to Immigrant Petitions (the DHS Immigration Regulations) should not be limited to acts of violence but also include extreme cruelty. Thus, legal immigration status and protections could be obtained through VAWA without requiring that the immigrant spouse or child wait for the abuse to escalate to physical or sexual violence.

The phrase "battery or extreme cruelty" includes a range of behaviors that the DHS Immigration Regulations define as follows:

1. The DHS Immigration Regulations define "battery or extreme cruelty" as:  
a. A crime under the laws of the United States, a State, or a foreign country, involving the infliction of physical injury on the immigrant spouse or child;  
b. A crime involving the infliction of extreme cruelty on the immigrant spouse or child;  
c. A crime involving the infliction of extreme cruelty on the immigrant spouse or child, including but not limited to:  
i. Sexual abuse;  
ii. Stalking;  
iii. Harassment;  
iv. Intimidation;  
v. Threats of physical harm;  
vi. Threats of financial harm;  
vii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's reputation;  
viii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's immigration status;  
ix. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;  
x. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status, including but not limited to:  
i. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;  
ii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status, including but not limited to:  
i. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;  
ii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status, including but not limited to:  
i. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;

2. The DHS Immigration Regulations define "extreme cruelty" as:  
a. A crime involving the infliction of extreme cruelty on the immigrant spouse or child, including but not limited to:  
i. Sexual abuse;  
ii. Stalking;  
iii. Harassment;  
iv. Intimidation;  
v. Threats of physical harm;  
vi. Threats of financial harm;  
vii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's reputation;  
viii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's immigration status;  
ix. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;  
x. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status, including but not limited to:  
i. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;  
ii. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status, including but not limited to:  
i. Threats of harm to the immigrant spouse or child's ability to obtain legal immigration status;

This definition of "battery or extreme cruelty" includes a continuum of abusive activities. Actions that are considered criminal under state law and which provide justification for issuance of a civil protection order or initiation of a criminal prosecution have always been generally the equivalent of "battery" under the DHS Immigration Regulations. When Congress created the battered spouse waiver in 1990 and VAWA protections (self-petitions, suspension of deportation, and cancellation of removal) in [1994], it coupled the DHS Immigration Regulations' definition of battery with the broader range of

<sup>1</sup> This document was developed under grant number SJI-12-E-169 from the State Justice Institute. The points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the State Justice Institute.

<sup>2</sup> We would like to thank Stefanie Gitler and Jeanne Cohn-Conner pro bono counsel at Kirkland and Ellis for their assistance in developing this publication.



- Family Offenses, Nonviolent;
- Stalking; [and]
- Trespass of Real Property”..<sup>9</sup>

The Model Code also allowed the opportunity for states to add additional crimes to the list.<sup>10</sup> Over time, state protection order statutes have expanded to offer protection against a larger list of family violence offenses including stalking, harassment, and threats, and attempts to harm family members, household members and intimate partners. However, the analysis conducted to support most protection orders issued in the United States continues to focus on criminal activity.<sup>11</sup>

The family court rulings that consider extreme cruelty an important factor in determining whether to provide protection to harmed individuals have other significant considerations in common with VAWA immigration cases. All VAWA self-petitions, VAWA cancellation and VAWA suspension cases require

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- P [REDACTED] 3
- T [REDACTED] 4
- U [REDACTED] 5
- S [REDACTED] 6
- S [REDACTED] 7
- S [REDACTED] 8
- H [REDACTED] 19
- P [REDACTED] 20
- S [REDACTED] 21
- SP [REDACTED] 22
- THREATENING TO KILL SPOUSE<sup>23</sup>
- VIOLATING OTHER RESTRAINING OR NO-CONTACT ORDERS<sup>24</sup>

A. Setting the stage:

There are four ways in which abusers can set the stage for apprehension of impending violence against the victim and beginning the cycle of coercive control: i) creating vulnerabilities, ii) exploiting existing vulnerabilities, iii) wearing down resistance, and iv) facilitating attachment.<sup>29</sup>

i) Creating vulnerabilities:

- ~~is~~ 30
- ~~is~~ 31
- ~~is~~ 32
- ~~is~~ 33

ii) Exploiting Existing Vulnerabilities

- ~~36~~ 36
- ~~37~~ 37
- ~~38~~ 38
- ~~39~~ 39
- ~~40~~ 40
- ~~41~~ 41

iii) Wearing Down Resistance

- ~~42~~ 42
- ~~43~~ 43
- ~~44~~ 44
- ~~45~~ 45
- ~~46~~ 46
- ~~47~~ 47
- ~~48~~ 48
- ~~49~~ 49
- ~~50~~ 50
- ~~51~~

B) Coercive demand

- ~~1991~~ 1991 8
- ~~1995~~ 1995 5
- ~~1996~~ 1996 5
- ~~1997~~ 1997 8
- ~~1998~~ 1998 8

- ~~File~~