



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Victim Assistance Program invited to speak at Governor Kasich's signing of House Bill 1, an expansion of civil protection orders for victims of dating violence**

Today, April 5, 2018 at 5:00pm, Ohio Governor John Kasich will sign into law House Bill 1, which allows victims of violence in a dating relationship to petition for domestic violence civil protection orders, a right previously afforded exclusively to married couples, family or household members, and couples who share a child in common. The Bill also requires the Attorney General's victim's bill of rights pamphlet to include dating violence as part of the definition of domestic violence.

Speaking at the signing tonight prior to Governor Kasich are Representative Emilia Sykes, the Bill's primary sponsor alongside Representative Manning, the Senate Speaker, and Mickey Valdez, Director of Services for Victim Assistance Program. Watch the signing live at [ohiochannel.org](http://ohiochannel.org) or Governor Kasich's official Facebook page.

House Bill 1 is a monumental achievement for the victims' right movement. Prior to the signing, Ohio and Georgia were the only two states that did not allow victims of dating violence to apply for domestic violence civil protection orders. This change in legislation is so crucial because victims of dating violence suffered through the same trauma as victims of domestic violence defined above and were often subjected to additional victimization when they were unable to receive the help they needed due to legislation constraints.

Victim Assistance Program advocates for all victims of crime or trauma, providing them with crisis intervention and advocacy. The passing of House Bill 1 allows Victim Assistance Program to provide more comprehensive resources and support to victims of domestic violence in a dating relationship. Victim Assistance Program joined with other community partners, such as Michael Evans, Cleveland Clinic Akron General and Judge Ron Cable of Akron Municipal Court, in support of the Bill.

The mission of Victim Assistance Program is to empower our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy. The purpose of the Agency is to provide 24-hour crisis intervention, advocacy, and education to victims of crime and trauma and the professional community who serves this population. To learn more about Victim Assistance Program's services, and ways to get involved, visit [victimassistanceprogram.org](http://victimassistanceprogram.org) or call our 24-hour hotline, 330.376.0040.

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