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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct the Attorney General to develop a model lethality assessment protocol for use by law enforcement with respect to domestic violence and to develop a public awareness campaign with respect to resources for victims of domestic violence, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. VAN EPPS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Attorney General to develop a model lethality assessment protocol for use by law enforcement with respect to domestic violence and to develop a public awareness campaign with respect to resources for victims of domestic violence, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Screening Harm, Iden-
5 tifying Escalating Lethality Danger for Victims Act of
6 2026” or as the “SHIELD for Victims Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds as follows:

3 (1) As already recognized by the National Insti-
4 tute of Justice (NIJ), intimate partner violence is a
5 pervasive issue in the United States. And research-
6 ers at the NIJ found that the Lethality Assessment
7 Program reduced the severity and frequency of vio-
8 lence survivors experienced.

9 (2) The Lethality Assessment Program is a
10 lethality screen for intimate partner violence victims
11 recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice as a
12 “promising practice” in intimate partner homicide
13 prevention.

14 (3) The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of
15 Justice Programs has an existing relationship with
16 the Lethality Assessment Program Maryland Model
17 and encourages DOJ to continue using the Lethality
18 Assessment Program Maryland Model in its
19 trainings.

20 (4) Utah, Florida, Maryland, Kentucky, South
21 Dakota, and Montana have existing language in
22 state law regarding the lethality assessment pro-
23 gram. Additionally, local communities, including the
24 Metro Nashville Police Department, have success-
25 fully implemented their own Lethality Assessment
26 Program.

1 (5) It is important to include a primary aggressor training in the LAP training curriculum.

2 **SEC. 3. MODEL LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL.**

3 (a) DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLICATION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
5 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney
6 General shall develop and make publicly available a
7 model lethality assessment protocol for use by law
8 enforcement officers in identifying victims of domestic
9 violence, assessing the risk of serious injury or
10 death with respect to such victims, and connecting
11 such victims to appropriate resources.

12 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the model
13 lethality assessment protocol under paragraph (1),
14 the Attorney General shall—

15 (A) consult with relevant experts and consider
16 applicable best practices; and

17 (B) establish a model questionnaire to be
18 implemented as part of such protocol.

19 (b) TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES OF FEDERAL LAW
20 ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTERS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 884(d) of the Homeland
22 Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 464(d)) is
23 amended by adding at the end the following new
24 paragraph:
25

1 “(13) LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL
2 TRAINING REQUIRED.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall
4 provide to each covered Federal law enforce-
5 ment officer—

6 “(i) a training with respect to the
7 model lethality assessment protocol devel-
8 oped under section 2 of the SHIELD for
9 Victims Act of 2026; and

10 “(ii) a refresher training with respect
11 to such protocol to be completed by such
12 officer at least once every 3 years after the
13 date on which such officer completes the
14 training described in clause (i).

15 “(B) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this
16 paragraph, the term ‘covered Federal law en-
17 forcement officer’ means a Federal law enforce-
18 ment officer (as such term is defined in section
19 2 of the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge
20 of Bravery Act of 2008 (34 U.S.C. 50301)) if
21 the duties of such officer—

22 “(i) are primarily related to collection
23 of evidence, interdiction and seizure of con-
24 traband, surveillance, execution of search
25 warrants, analysis of information, arrest of

1 suspects, development of cases for prosecu-
2 tions, or any other investigation and en-
3 forcement duties pertaining to Federal
4 laws and regulations; or

5 “(ii) are primarily related to preven-
6 tive patrol, responding to complaints and
7 reports of illegal activities, arresting viola-
8 tors, traffic control, crowd control, han-
9 dling of emergencies, or other traditional
10 law enforcement responsibilities.”.

11 (2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Attorney Gen-
12 eral shall make publicly available the curriculum and
13 materials related to the training developed under
14 paragraph (13) of section 884(d) of the Homeland
15 Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 464(d)), as added by
16 paragraph (1).

17 **SEC. 4. REPORT.**

18 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
19 of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall sub-
20 mit to Congress a report setting forth a plan to ensure
21 Federal law enforcement officers are connected to local do-
22 mestic violence response resources as necessary when
23 properly conducting the Lethality Assessment Program.