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**FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY ANNOUNCES NYCHOPE, NEW WEB PORTAL
FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

City continues to implement Domestic Violence Task Force Recommendations through innovative web portal where survivors can connect to information and resources, and the City's first domestic violence awareness campaign in over a decade

NEW YORK— First Lady Chirlane McCray today announced the launch of New York City's first-ever, web-based portal, [NYCHOPE](#), dedicated to providing resources to survivors and information to all City residents about how to help someone experiencing domestic violence. The City also unveiled its first domestic violence awareness campaign in more than a decade, "We Understand" – developed in conjunction with advocates and survivors to speak to the complexities of abusive relationships, highlight the availability of support and services in New York City, and share diverse testimonials from survivors of intimate partner violence.

The web portal and campaign were recommendations of the [NYC Domestic Violence Task Force](#), which is co-chaired by First Lady McCray and NYPD Commissioner James O'Neill. The work of the task force is co-led by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence.

"It is time to stop asking survivors of domestic violence why they stay and start asking what more can we do to support them and their families. The innovative NYCHOPE portal and 'We Understand' ad campaign will help educate New Yorkers about the complexities of intimate partner violence, and make it easier for survivors to access the services they need for safety and heal from trauma," said **First Lady Chirlane McCray, Co-Chair of the Domestic Violence Task Force**.

"Raising awareness around domestic violence and the impact it has on survivors, families and communities is an important step towards helping survivors," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Herminia Palacio**. "With the launch of the new NYCHOPE portal and the domestic violence awareness campaign we build upon this Administration's efforts to support survivors, and hope to encourage New Yorkers to speak up and seek help if they need it."

“Domestic violence remains a significantly under-reported crime, due in part to the fact that victims often feel there is nowhere to turn for help,” said **Police Commissioner James O’Neill, Co-Chair of the Domestic Violence Task Force**. “This portal provides both the victims themselves, as well as those who suspect that such activity is occurring, the ability to readily reach out for assistance and support.”

“Prevention and awareness are the most effective tools against domestic violence, and with this campaign, we are letting survivors know that while the reasons they may remain in relationships is complicated, the connection to services and information about help are easy to access,” said **Cecile Noel, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence**. “With NYCHOPE we are adding a new level of support, enhancing our ability to support survivors wherever they may find themselves.”

Elizabeth Glazer, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, said, “This campaign will make our City’s residents aware of potentially life-saving services. An indispensable part of keeping New Yorkers safe is making sure that survivors of violence have access to the services they need.”

“NYCHOPE stands to become a literal life-saving resource for some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. Survivors of domestic violence will now have an online portal that makes it as easy and intuitive as possible to get the services and information they need, and we’re proud to have contributed to that effort,” said **Samir Saini, Commissioner of the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications**. “This is the kind of project and team that embodies DoITT’s mission to serve and empower New Yorkers by designing people-centric technology solutions. I thank First Lady McCray, OCDV, and the team for empowering and assisting survivors in such a powerful way.”

“Domestic violence takes many forms – including physical, sexual and emotional – and can affect anyone,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett**. “I commend the Office to Combat Domestic Violence for launching this powerful campaign that acknowledges the complexities of an abusive relationship and reasons New Yorkers may be reluctant to seek help. I encourage domestic violence survivors to find help through NYCHOPE.”

“The Commission on Gender Equity applauds the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence for the creation of this new portal and important campaign. These tools underscore, once again, that New York City stands against domestic violence and with individuals and families seeking a path to safety and stability,” said **Jacqueline Ebanks, Executive Director of the Commission on Gender Equity**.

The “We Understand” ad campaign and promotional spots—which were developed by the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence in collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the advertising agency Bandujo—are supported by a \$710,000 investment and will run for 12 weeks through the first week of April 2018. Ads will run on bus shelters, subways, the Staten Island Ferry, and on social media platforms. OCDV is also partnering with iHeartMedia, Inc. to run promotional spots on 103.5 KTU FM and Power 105.1 FM, voiced by popular radio DJs Charlamagne Tha God, Lulu and Lala. The campaign videos

will run on LinkNYC kiosks across the city throughout February, in addition to a week-long run on Taxi TV.

The new campaign aims to connect survivors and their loved ones to the City's new web-based portal, [NYCHOPE](#), which brings together the resources and services survivors regularly access and serves as a hub. Survivors can obtain all of this information in one centralized location that can be accessed from any computer, smartphone, tablet, or other device with internet access. NYCHOPE was designed and developed by the NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunication in collaboration with Cornell Tech. During the 2016-2017 school year, students at Cornell Tech interviewed over 100 Family Justice Center clients to assess how technology can support their needs for education, information and easy access to resources. During these interviews, survivors explained how they were directed and redirected to numerous agencies and websites as they tried to seek help, services and information. DoITT did further testing directly with OCDV clients to ensure that NYCHOPE is as intuitive and easy-to-use as possible.

Features of the NYCHOPE web portal include a resource directory providing survivors with easy access to locate services within their community, information about healthy relationships and signs of abuse, and a useful guide about how to help a friend or family member experiencing abuse. The portal includes tech safety tips and a quick-escape feature for users to ensure their safety while accessing the platform. Finally, the portal includes information about the city's five Family Justice Centers, and directly connects users to other City agency sites to easily access information.

"There is no instance in which domestic violence is ever acceptable. Furthermore, no victim should feel alone," said **Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez**. "I applaud the City for undertaking a new campaign to connect survivors of domestic violence with support, education and vital resources. From the federal level, I will continue to fight for additional resources to advocate for victims and ensure that perpetrators of such violence are brought to justice."

"Domestic violence affects individuals of all genders, races, and ages," said **Congressman Joseph Crowley**. "NYCHOPE will provide the information and education victims and their families need to recognize, escape, and heal from abuse."

"Domestic violence doesn't discriminate, and it is our shared responsibility as a community to help victims and raise awareness," said **Congressman Dan Donovan**. "During my time as DA, and now as a legislator, I have continually acted to shine a light on the silent epidemic of abuse, including working to establish the Staten Island Family Justice Center. NYCHOPE will help educate the vulnerable, empower survivors, and hopefully save innocent lives."

"I commend the Mayor and First Lady for launching this domestic violence awareness campaign. This initiative will be a major resource in providing important information and education about domestic violence as well as direct connections to needed resources. It is imperative that we increase awareness of and combat this terrible abuse, and ensure that victims receive all the services and support they need," said **Congresswoman Grace Meng**.

“I applaud First Lady Chirlane McCray and the City’s efforts to combat domestic violence in diverse communities all across New York City. The launch of this new campaign will add additional resources and improve education to help those most in need. I hope all those affected by domestic violence will use the City services available to them, including the innovative NYCHOPE portal,” said **State Senator José M. Serrano**.

We must stop the deadly cycle of abuse. No one should suffer in silence fearing repercussion because of this scourge perpetrated upon them. I encourage victims of domestic violence to take advantage of the assistance available from city and state agencies. Survivors need to be encouraged to seek help, and offered information and support as they endeavor to disengage themselves from this vicious cycle of domestic abuse. NYC is taking a great first step with this campaign!” said **State Senator Roxanne Persaud**.

“Every person deserves to live a life free from domestic violence, and we must do more to support DV victims. This awareness campaign reminds New Yorkers that domestic violence does not discriminate based on race or socioeconomic status, and shows us how detrimental domestic violence can be. One in three women and one in four men have been victims of some form of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime. This means that it’s likely that somebody you know has suffered some form of domestic abuse, and because of this, it’s a personal issue for me, as it should be for many of us. I applaud First Lady McCray, Police Chief O’Neill, and the Mayor’s DV Task Force for putting together this awareness campaign. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that New York continues to protect victims of domestic violence,” said **Assembly Member Yuh-Line Niou**.

“Perpetrators of domestic violence shatter families and do unknowable damage to their victims and those in the periphery. It is essential that we bolster public awareness of domestic violence, and work to connect those in need of intervention with supportive services however we can. We must open new pathways to safety by empowering survivors and the public, while ensuring everyone has the tools and know-how to get help when it is most needed. NYCHOPE will help save lives and I applaud First Lady McCray and the City for taking this important step,” said **Assembly Member Linda B. Rosenthal**.

“According to the CDC 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will experience severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. However, domestic violence claims victims from not only spouses and partners but, family members. Some people may not even notice the signs that they are in physically or sexually violent relationship. I applaud First Lady McCray on this Domestic Violence initiative because it is an excellent way of spreading awareness of domestic violence and educating people on how to seek assistance,” said **Assembly Member Latrice Walker**.

“As a woman and mother, I am thrilled to see that the City is taking major steps to address Domestic Violence by creating this awareness campaign. Domestic violence is a prevalent issue in our communities and we must understand that it comes in many forms and at times the indicators are not as visible. NYCHOPE certainly offers a platform for those who are in despair and feel voiceless through access to information, education, and direct resources regarding domestic violence assistance. I want to thank the Mayor’s DV Taskforce and First Lady McCray for this much needed campaign for our City,” said **Assembly Member Carmen De La Rosa**.

“A domestic violence campaign is critical to educating New Yorkers about an immensely important issue that affects thousands of people, most often women and children,” said **Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon**. “The new web-based portal NYCHOPE will be of great benefit as people will have access to valuable resources through their smartphones and computers. I thank First Lady Chirlane McCray and the Mayor’s DV Task Force for their commitment to spreading awareness on domestic violence and creating new avenues for survivors to seek help.”

“Thank you to to the Mayor's Domestic Violence Task Force, First Lady Chirlane McCray, and Police Commissioner O'Neill for your support of the NYCHOPE Campaign,” said **Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman**. “Not only does this campaign bring attention to the severity of Domestic Violence, but it also encourages survivors to speak their truth. Let’s continue to stand united against domestic violence and provide support to the many who experience this injustice.”

The Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence manages the City’s five Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. The Centers serve as one-stop service centers to reduce barriers for victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, sex trafficking, and connect them to services in their language, regardless of immigration status, income, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The City’s Domestic Violence Hotline is available 24/7 and provides safety planning, referrals, and connections to emergency housing for victims of domestic violence. Individuals can contact the City’s Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE.

In an effort to prioritize new and innovative approaches to domestic violence, the de Blasio administration launched the NYC Domestic Violence Task Force two years ago, an \$11 million initiative to implement a set of 32 recommendations for a coordinated, citywide strategy to combat domestic violence. In October 2017, the City allocated an additional \$3.9 million to expand healthy relationship programming to middle schools, broaden services to keep survivors safe in their own homes and launch the new ad campaign and web-based portal announced today.

New York City has made significant strides towards combating domestic violence and supporting survivors within the last year, including:

- Signing Intro. 1313-A that expands NYC’s paid leave laws to employees who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and trafficking so they can focus on safety and plan their next steps without fearing loss of income.
- Expanding the Administration for Children’s Services’ Investigative Consultant program that provides training, consultation and support to the agency’s investigative staff. Using a new protocol to identify families at risk of experiencing domestic violence, the investigative consultants will now provide support to families receiving prevention services through ACS that are not subjects of active child-protection investigations.
- OCDV, in collaboration with the Human Resource Administration’s Office of Civil Justice, implemented onsite housing legal assistance for clients at the NYC Family Justice Centers.

- Expanding healthy relationship training and education to students, staff and parents at 128 middle schools throughout all five boroughs through the Early-Relationship Abuse Prevention Program.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. said, “The easier it is to navigate the wide-ranging supports and services available across New York City, the more likely it is that a survivor of domestic violence can break the cycle of abuse. My Office was proud to serve on the working groups that helped make this important campaign a reality and we look forward to continuing to partner with the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence to ensure New Yorkers learn about and access the services they need.”

Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez said, “I commend the First Lady and the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence for launching a public awareness campaign that highlights this important issue. To effectively confront familial abuse, we need a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach that combines education, services and enforcement. That was the recommendation of a Task Force my Office has been proud to be part of, and that has long been the vision of the Brooklyn Family Justice Center. Assisting survivors and pointing them to available services does not only help in successfully prosecuting their cases – it also allows them to rebuild their lives and free themselves from an often-escalating cycle of abuse.”

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said, “As a proud partner in our city’s effort to prevent domestic violence, I endorse this campaign which informs and connects DV survivors to the NYCHOPE portal, where helpful and meaningful resources can be found in one place. Spreading awareness through all media forms will help to remove the stigma and empower victims of these life-altering crimes.”

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown said, “When I became the District Attorney of Queens County more than 26 years ago, one of my top priorities was to hold those who would batter a spouse or loved one accountable for their actions. Since then, my office has become a national leader in domestic violence prosecution and has consistently led the city with the highest conviction rate and the lowest dismissal rate. I was honored that my office was selected last year as the co-chair of the criminal justice section of the NYC Domestic Violence Task Force. I applaud the Mayor and the First Lady for their initiative to raise awareness and I am pleased to assist in whatever way possible to combat domestic violence in our communities.”

“Domestic violence continues to be one of the most serious issues we face on Staten Island, but with increased awareness we can help survivors to navigate through these complicated relationships and into the open arms of community-based resources,” said **Staten Island District Attorney Michael E. McMahon**. “I commend the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence for all of their outstanding work on behalf of survivors across the City, including their efforts with my office to open a Family Justice Center on Staten Island. When combined with these existing resources, this latest campaign will add another layer of much-needed support so that victims of domestic violence can find the help they need and allow us to better prosecute those guilty of the violence.”

“Queens has a deep commitment to supporting survivors, and First Lady McCray’s citywide awareness campaign backed by public investment is a reflection of our shared priority. Domestic violence is a complex problem, and fully eradicating it is far from over. The ‘We Understand’ campaign and ‘NYCHope’ are important steps to combat intimate partner violence in our city and publicize the resources available for all survivors,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**.

“Our city, under the watchful eye of Lady Liberty has always been a beacon of hope for people of all ages and backgrounds. I want to thank First Lady Chirlane McCray and OCDV Commissioner Cecile Noel for their leadership in launching NYCHOPE, a lifesaving portal that will make supportive services and programs more readily accessible to survivors of violence. As the former chair of the Committee on Women’s Issues and co-chair of the Women’s Caucus, combatting domestic and intimate partner violence has been at the forefront of our legislative agenda to create safe pathways for families to rebuild their lives. I was proud to spearhead and work in partnership with OCDV and my colleagues to raise awareness through NYC Go Purple Day and a historic increase in DoVE funding. “We Understand” is the continuation of our year-round efforts to become UpStanders, break the cycle of violence by empowering families, and illuminate the dark corners of communities where they have suffered in silence for far too long,” said **Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo**.

“NYCHOPE is a critical effort to help survivors access the resources they need. It’s also an opportunity for this City to confront the fact that domestic violence is able to persist in part because of our reluctance to talk about it,” said **Councilmember Helen Rosenthal, Chair of the Committee on Women**. This thoughtful and inclusive campaign is exactly the right track to take, and I applaud the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence and the First Lady for leading it.”

“Regrettably, I don’t know of anyone, who does not know of someone who’s been impacted by Domestic Violence,” said **Councilmember Diana Ayala**. “Whether it’s been a family member, friend, neighbor, or as in my personal experience as a survivor; DV is prevalent in all communities and all walks of life. All too often we have read or heard of yet another victim of this scourge, and the devastation left behind for children and family members to cope with. DV victims are often isolated and don’t know that there are resources out there to help them escape their suffering. I applaud the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence and all the partnering agencies that are providing this much needed and long-awaited awareness campaign. This campaign will provide victims the critical information needed to escape toxic relationships. This educational campaign will also equip the general public with the necessary information to share with someone they suspect is experiencing this type of aggression. This empowering campaign will surely save lives; and we thank the Mayor for his investment in such a vulnerable population.”

"Domestic violence does not discriminate; it can affect New Yorkers of all backgrounds and socioeconomic status," said **Councilmember Ben Kallos**. "I am proud that New York City is taking this issue head-on and taking the necessary steps to combat this scourge. By making New Yorkers aware of the resources our City is offering we are letting victims know there is hope, and that they are not alone. Thank you to First Lady Chirlane McCray for her tireless work and leadership on this issue."

“As domestic violence reports are on the rise due to increased awareness and better access to resources for victims, it is imperative that we continue to do everything in the City’s power to reach out to families in all boroughs,” said **Councilmember Donovan Richards**. “We must preach the power and importance of building healthy relationships in every home and every community. I commend First Lady Chirlane McCray for leading this fight and delivering critical investments that address abusive relationships and connect survivors with the necessary resources to cope with the aftermath and devastation of domestic violence.”

“For domestic violence victims, it’s never as simple as ‘just leave.’ When a victim calls the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline, a compassionate and trained Safe Horizon advocate picks up. We explore a victim’s unique situation, develop safety plans, and link them to important local services such as shelter, counseling, expert legal help, and more,” said **Ariel Zwang, CEO of Safe Horizon**. “I am deeply grateful to the NYC Task Force on Domestic Violence for creating a campaign that recognizes just how complicated domestic violence is, and lets victims know they can call the hotline, or visit NYCHOPE, for help. I also applaud First Lady Chirlane McCray, NYPD Commissioner James O’Neill, OCDV Commissioner Cecile Noel and MOCJ Director Elizabeth Glazer for their leadership on the Task Force, and for strengthening the city’s responses to domestic violence victims and their children.”

“Access to information can be a lifeline for isolated victims of domestic violence. By making critical information and resources easily accessible through a city-wide public awareness campaign and a new online resource portal, this initiative will open doors for thousands of vulnerable victims and put them on a path to safety and self-sufficiency,” said **Hon. Judy Harris Kluger, Executive Director of Sanctuary for Families**. “Sanctuary extends its deepest thanks to the Mayor’s Domestic Violence Task Force, co-chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray and Police Commissioner James O’Neill, Commissioner Cecile Noel and the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, and the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice for their commitment and leadership.”

“Through our extensive work and research, it became clear that there aren’t enough tools, resources or accessible information for survivors to get the help they need,” said **Nicki Dell, Assistant Professor at the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech**. “We’re proud to be a partner in the development of NYCHOPE, having seen this campaign grow from its inception at one of our own classrooms, to its launch today. Working on this impactful campaign is a profound example of how Cornell Tech is reinventing the way we live in the digital age.”

For more information about the NYC Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence>.

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