



Freedom from Violence

The Maine Women's Lobby works to protect women against violence in their homes, relationships, communities, and workplaces.

Highlights of Legislative Achievements 1978-Present

- 1979 Maine Legislature votes to use State money to fund Battered Women's Projects.**
It was the rejection of this bill in 1978 that mobilized women to form the Maine Women's Lobby.
- 1985 "Spousal Exemption" removed from Maine's sexual assault laws.**
Maine Women's Lobby worked to make Marital Rape recognized as a crime so that partners are no longer immune from criminal prosecution for raping their spouse. Language is also enacted to make it no longer a "lesser crime" if you are raped on a date.
- 1991 Maine enacts model sexual harassment law.**
Maine Women's Lobby advances *first-in-the-nation legislation* requiring employers to post notices and conduct training on preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 1996 Maine Enacts An Act to Prohibit Stalking.**
Maine Women's Lobby supported legislation to make stalking a crime.
- 1999 Employment leave guaranteed for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.**
Maine Women's Lobby advances *first-in-the-nation legislation* providing job protection to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The law requires all employers to grant leave so that survivors may attend court proceedings or receive medical treatment.
- 2001 Maine Legislature passes An Act to Fund Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Programs.**
The Maine Women's Lobby worked with allies to promote funding of needed services, securing passage of the bill in the final hours of the session.
- 2003 Firearms removed from abusers.**
The Maine Women's Lobby worked to pass this critical legislation, allowing a judge to remove weapons from domestic violence perpetrators as part of temporary Protection from Abuse Orders.
- 2005 Maine's address confidentiality program improved.**
The Maine Women's Lobby promoted this bill to allow survivors of violence to register and exercise their right to vote.

2006 Victim notification law.

Maine Women's Lobby helped pass legislation enabling victims of violence to be notified when a person named in a Protection from Abuse Order (PFA) attempts to purchase a firearm.

2007 Predominant aggressor law passed.

Maine Women's Lobby worked with allies on legislation to prevent arrest of victims by requiring law enforcement to evaluate who is the predominant physical aggressor in domestic abuse circumstances.

2007 Making battering a crime.

Maine Women's Lobby joined allies in advancing *first-in-the-nation* legislation to define domestic violence assault, domestic violence criminal threatening, domestic violence terrorizing, domestic violence stalking, and domestic violence reckless conduct and making all Class D crimes.

2008 Strengthened stalking laws.

The Maine Women's Lobby worked to pass this bill to better address the seriousness of stalking as a crime. It clarifies and broadens definitions of stalking to account for new technologies used by stalkers.