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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **The State of Illinois Gives Hope to Domestic Violence Families**

**LAKE COUNTY, IL** – There is a light at the end of the tunnel for domestic violence victims and their children. Since July 1, 2016, critical state funding has been withheld from domestic violence agencies due to an omission in the stop gap budget measure because of a statewide budget stalemate. Critical state funding that is essential to sustain the lifesaving programs and services for domestic violence victims and their children.

But, on May 25, the House Appropriations Human Services Committee took the first step toward providing full funding for domestic violence services and passed HB 3259.

One such domestic violence agency, A Safe Place, the sole provider of services exclusively focusing on domestic violence victims in Lake County, relies on state dollars to keep its doors open. Since 47% of its funding comes from the state, and with no aid forthcoming, staff has been working overtime and doubling up on their fundraising efforts to make sure they don't have to turn even more families away, or even worse, close their doors.

As the leading advocate for eliminating domestic violence in northern Illinois, A Safe Place helps save lives with programs that assist the whole family in transforming their lives after domestic violence, prevent future abuse by addressing its root cause through abuser intervention programs, and educate the community about domestic violence and how we can all be involved in its end. Last year, A Safe Place served over 13,000 community members from Lake, McHenry, northern Cook, and Kenosha counties.

“The lack of support and funding from the state of Illinois has decimated our ability to serve and reach the families who need us the most,” said A Safe Place Executive Director Pat Davenport. “When you have to look at the possibility of reducing the number of therapists, court advocates, crisis line support, or staff from the emergency shelter, it is disheartening for all of us. These are the resources people need.”

With the passing of HB 3259, the House committee has given hope to all statewide domestic violence agencies and particularly those who have closed or are facing closure in the near future.

The bill now moves to the House floor and could be sent over to the Senate during the upcoming holiday weekend while the legislature is in Springfield. Advocates will continue to push for the passage of HB 3259 through the House and Senate before the May 31 regular Session deadline.

Photo 1:

The Transitional Living apartment building at A Safe Place provides safe, affordable housing, counseling, and supportive services for families who have fled abusive relationships.



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*Founded in 1978, A Safe Place is the leading advocate for eliminating domestic violence in northern Illinois, and is Lake County, Illinois’ only provider of services exclusively for victims of domestic violence. A Safe Place provides emergency shelter, permanent housing, a 24-hour crisis line (847-249-4450), court and non-legal advocacy, individual, group, and children’s counseling, art therapy, family visitation services, batterer intervention services; and community outreach, prevention education, and professional*

*training. Our service area includes Lake, McHenry, and northern Cook counties in Illinois; however, our clients come to us from across the state, region, and country.*

*For more information about A Safe Place, visit [www.asafeplaceforhelp.org](http://www.asafeplaceforhelp.org), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).*