Jailed DV Survivors Aided; Gaddafi 'Ordered Rape'

By WeNews staff
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Cheers

New York State Sen. Ruth Hassell-Thompson and Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry introduced a bill in Albany June 7 that would allow judges to shorten prison sentences for survivors of domestic violence who are convicted of crimes directly related to their abuse.

The Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act would also allow judges to recommend programs that serve as alternatives to incarceration, such as community service and defender based advocacy programs. Under the bill, survivors who are currently imprisoned could apply for resentencing.

The bill is grounded in a report announced at the same press conference about barriers-- such as parole refusal-- that female survivors face in the New York criminal justice system. The report is co-authored by the Avon Global Center for Women and Justice at Cornell Law School and the Women in Prison Project of the Correctional Association of New York.

"The design of the New York criminal law fails to establish minimum sentences that take survivor's experiences into account," Liz Brundige, associate director of the Avon Global Center, told Women's eNew in an interview. "This limits their ability to gain admittance to alternative-to-incarceration programs. Other challenges stem from the failures of justice-system actors to fully account for the affects that abuse can have on the actions of survivors."

For more information about survivors in the courts from Women's eNews archives, read "Sheehan Says the Cop She Married Blocked All Exits" and "NYC Murder Case Hinges Abuse Expert Testimony."

--Krystie Yandoli

More News to Cheer This Week:

- A majority in Maine's House opposed bills that would require women who seek abortions to wait 24 hours, to read state-issued information about the procedure and would require minors to obtain parental consent, reported the Portland Press