



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY MCMASTER  
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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## **Seven Rural Counties To Get Help Prosecuting Domestic Violence**

### **Attorney General Receives \$900,000 Federal Grant for Dedicated CDV Prosecutors**

**Columbia, S.C.** – Attorney General Henry McMaster and U.S. Representative Jim Clyburn announced today that the Attorney General’s Office has been awarded \$900,000 from a new two-year federal grant to provide dedicated domestic violence prosecutors in magistrate and municipal courts in Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties.

The award from the 2005 Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program will also provide funds for the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) for dedicated court and victim’s advocates. The South Carolina Baptist Convention will also assist the effort by conducting CDV counseling training for local clergy.

The seven rural counties were selected by Attorney General McMaster based on the grant criteria of rural and very rural county census designation and contiguity. Six of seven are very rural; Marlboro County is classified as rural.

According to State Law Enforcement statistics, Marion County reported the state’s highest per capita rate of domestic violence victims in 2002. In 2003, Marion was fourth, Marlboro fifth and Darlington was sixth.

“Domestic Violence is the state’s number one crime problem and clearly women in these counties are calling for help,” said McMaster. “Now we will be able to provide it by putting prosecutors in their magistrates courts where ordinarily none are present.”

“When we called on Congressman Clyburn for help fighting domestic violence, he answered by personally helping us secure this critical grant,” added McMaster.



“I appreciate Attorney General McMaster’s leadership and emphasis on preventing and prosecuting domestic violence,” said Congressman Clyburn. “It’s important because domestic violence affects everyone; it knows no geographic or socio-economic boundaries and the children are always the ultimate victims of this destructive crime.”

The U.S. Census defines a county “very rural” if the population of the largest town in the county is less than 10,000, and “rural” when the population of largest town in the county less than 25,000.

The Attorney General’s Office will recruit, train and supervise three (3) prosecutors, a project coordinator and a part-time administrative assistant.

SCCADVASA will recruit, train and supervise three (3) court advocates to assist victims and prosecutors at every stage of the prosecution. They will also train a bilingual immigrant outreach coordinator to serve the Hispanic community.

The S.C. Baptist Convention will aid in the training of clergy, providing them with the tools necessary to recognize the signs of domestic violence within their congregations and communities. They will train clergy in counseling victims of domestic violence and instituting protocols that will help victims, if possible, find transient housing.

In addition to Congressman Clyburn, every member of the state Congressional delegation provided letters of support for the grant application. Others providing support were: Chief Justice Jean Toal, State Senator Kent Williams, State Representatives Denny Nielson, Murrell Smith and Ted Vick; Circuit Solicitors Ed Clements and Jay Hodge; the Governor’s Office, Darlington Sheriff Glenn Campbell, Dillon Sheriff Harold Grice, the state Department of Public Safety, the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the S.C. Network of Children’s Advocacy centers.

**More Information:** <http://www.scattorneygeneral.com/public/women.html>

**Download High Resolution Photo From Press Conference:**  
<http://www.scattorneygeneral.com/photoalbum/images/cdv%20grant.jpg>

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