

"Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give a voice to the voiceless victims of domestic violence.

I want to tell the story of one woman, from my state of Illinois, who endured years of abuse and called our state's Domestic Violence Help Line for help.

In her call, the woman explained that over the years she had suffered black eyes, broken and knocked out teeth, and broken bones. She said she couldn't take it anymore, but that she couldn't leave because she feared her abuser would find her and kill her.

She was suicidal and said she just needed to "end it" with the pills she had been collecting. Luckily this woman reached out for help; 911 was called, and the Help Line staff stayed on line with her until the paramedics arrived.

But sadly, most women never report their abuse, and even for those that do find the strength to report, many are denied services, such as shelter, due to scarce resources.

I speak today for those who cannot speak for themselves to say: We can end domestic violence, all we need is the *will* to do so."