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**Joint Board Matter with Chairman McKay and Supervisor Walkinshaw
Recognizing October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

Members of the Board,

Domestic violence is a pervasive issue that affects individuals across all communities, regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status. It not only impacts the physical and mental health of victims, but also leaves a lasting impact on families, children, and the larger community.

In FY 24, 21.4% of homicides in Fairfax County were domestic-related, a 15% increase from the previous year. In addition, the Fairfax County Police Department received 3,939 domestic violence calls, a 5.4% increase from the prior year. There were 277 arrest charges due to strangulation, a 5.7% increase from FY23, and annual calls to the 24/7 hotline increased 8.4% from FY23.

These and other measures indicate that we need to work together to end domestic violence. Agencies and organizations across Fairfax County continue to adapt their work to meet the evolving needs of those impacted by domestic violence. While community partners and agencies rise to meet these challenges, they struggle to maintain funding and retain qualified staff to deliver services. Awareness is key to significantly reducing interpersonal violence and creating safer communities in Fairfax County.

In recognition of the importance of bringing awareness to this critical issue, October has been designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) nationwide. This month provides an opportunity for communities to come together to support victims, promote prevention efforts, and educate the public about the far-reaching effects of domestic violence.

Recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Fairfax County will provide an opportunity to honor service providers while increasing public awareness of interpersonal violence and its impacts on victims and survivors, their families, and our community. In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, County residents are encouraged to wear purple on October 17th for Purple Out Day to show support for domestic violence survivors and their families. In addition, the K9 Krawl 5K on Saturday, October 12th at the Fairfax County Public Safety Headquarters is a unique opportunity for all dog lovers to come together and bring awareness to the co-occurrence between domestic violence and animal cruelty.

Therefore, I move without objection that the Board proclaim October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Fairfax County and ask the Office of Public Affairs to prepare a proclamation to be presented in the Board room at a future meeting.