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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Federal Government Shutdown threatens California's Rape Crisis Safety-net**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—October 16, 2013—California's safety-net for rape and sexual assault survivors is at risk, should the federal government shutdown extend beyond October 31<sup>st</sup>. With the deadline for raising the debt ceiling and possible USA default on its debts quickly approaching, our nation is losing sight of the rape and sexual victims that rely on support services to help them heal. The California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) is the professional organization representing the state's rape crisis center programs and the rape and sexual assault victims they serve.

"On behalf of rape and sexual assault survivors, we urge federal leaders to end this shutdown. Rape survivors need to be able to rely on the ability to receive counseling services, 24-hour support and advocacy that are currently available through 24-hour crisis hotlines and accompaniment advocacy services offered by the state's 84 Rape Crisis Center Programs. These programs serve each of the 58 counties in California," said Sandra Henriquez, CALCASA executive director.

This safety net is reliant on primarily federal funds which are passed through to state governmental organizations for administration. State administrators of federal monies have indicated that they have the funds to reimburse programs for services provided through October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013, however, should the shutdown continue, November will create new challenges including the risk of program closures. "California's heavy reliance on federal monies to fund the treatment and prevention of sexual assault, exacerbates an already challenging reality; the state's general fund contributes only \$45,000 for the entire state to cover rape crisis and emergency support services for victim. With 31,790 rape victims served in fiscal year 2011-2012, the state's general fund contribution amounts to a mere \$1.42 per victim served." said Henriquez.

As we urge our nation's leaders to come together to ensure that federal funds continue to flow to the state, we concurrently urge California's leadership to explore opportunities to increase the general fund contribution, ensuring that our state demonstrates a financial commitment to addressing the issue of sexual violence.

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## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IMPACT ON RCCS 2-2-2

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### ABOUT CALCASA:

*CALCASA is the only statewide organization in California whose sole purpose is to promote public policy, advocacy, training and technical assistance on the issue of sexual assault. CALCASA convenes statewide and national training conferences and its primary membership is composed of the 84 rape crisis centers and rape prevention programs in CA. Its affiliate membership is comprised of local, statewide and national organizations, businesses, and individuals committed to the elimination of sexual violence. For more information, visit [www.calcasa.org](http://www.calcasa.org).*