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Dear Reader:

For 14 years Have Justice--Will Travel (HJWT) has served destitute abused women and children with legal representation for relief from abuse orders, all family law matters and many probate court issues. In addition to legal issues help is provided with other needs such as housing, financial education, and job skills that clients need to put their lives back in order. Every year each HJWT lawyer serves 60-75 families depending on the severity of the case. Because federal funding (there has never been state funding) has diminished in the last several years, HJWT, which previously had five lawyers, now has two. We just hired a third part-time lawyer for the Northeast Kingdom area of Vermont (VT). (See 2012 News)

In addition to clients served by attorneys, in the past three years HJWT's Legal Empowerment Assistance Program (LEAP) has coached an average of 1,300 clients each year and provided legal advice for *pro se* litigants (when one represents oneself before the court). Overall 10,000 women and children have received legal representation or advice from HJWT since 1998.

It is that time of year for HJWT to ask you to give money so that rural abused women and their children in VT can escape from their tormentor and learn that they can live a life without fear. In the US this has been the year of politicians asking, asking and asking again and again to the public to provide funds for their campaigns. Also in this country the money for grants from the US DOJ Office of Violence Against Women has decreased and dried up in the last several years, as have many funds in government for the most needy. All of this is a vicious cycle, and those hurt the most are women, children, and the needy.

All services HJWT provides are free for clients—clients that cannot afford to pay even \$10 an hour for a lawyer. The census data now say that 22% of children under 18 live in poverty in the US and 16.7% in VT, while 7.2% live in extreme poverty in VT. The US has 13.8% of all people who are poor and in the most rural areas of VT 14% who are poor. (See over for additional statistics.) HJWT needs enough money to transport clients to and from court, pay court fees for clients, hold mentoring groups for women, cover phone and computer costs, pay attorney and staff salaries, and for overhead such as rent, heat, and utilities.

HJWT is working to help as many women and children in VT as possible. Please help us help those who are so desperate. HJWT's mantra is "Breaking the Generational Cycle of Abuse." Having served thousands, the hope is that those children now living a stable life without abuse will grow up to have safe families. Your assistance is a much-needed part of helping break that cycle of abuse. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Wynona I. Ward, Esq.  
Founder and Director