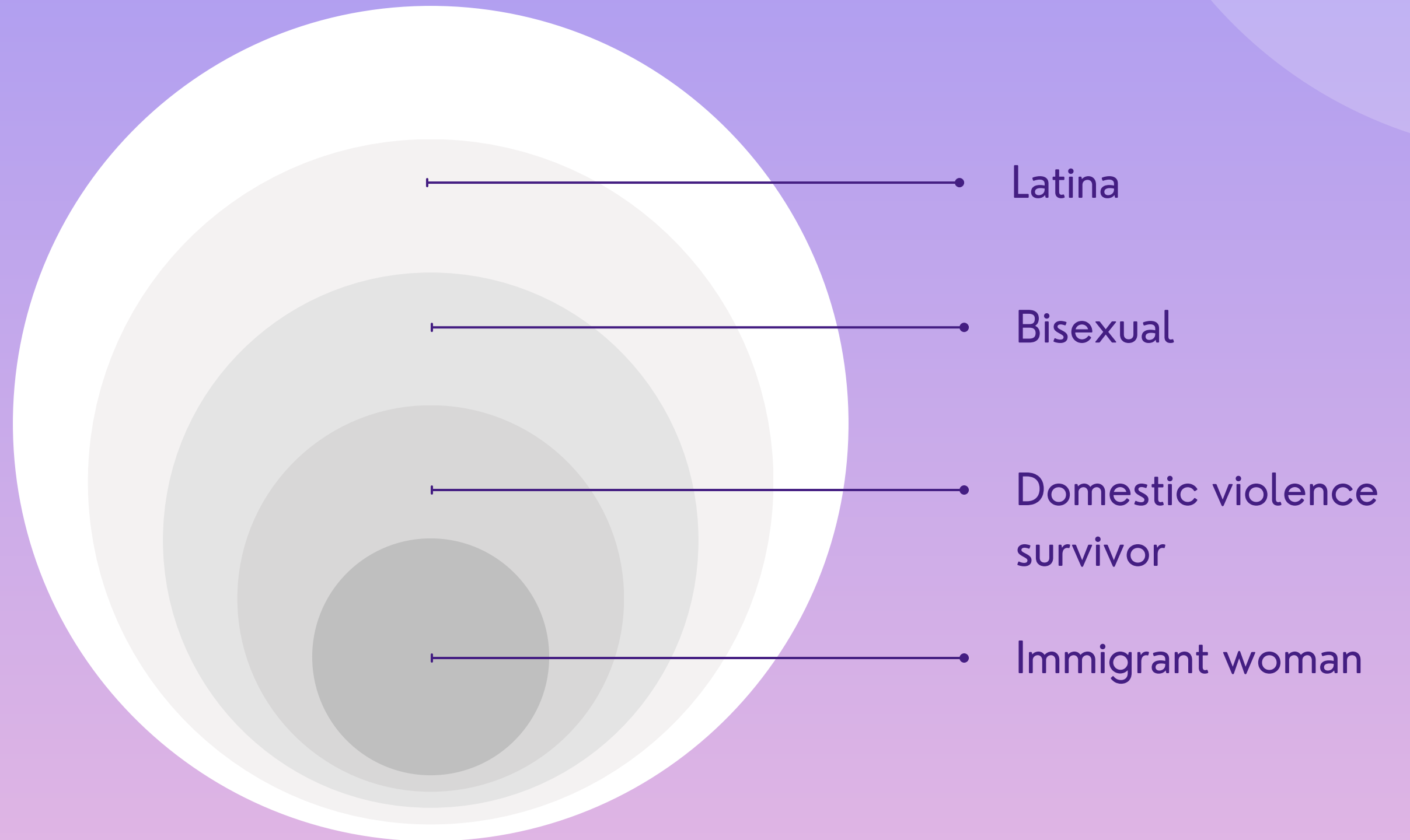


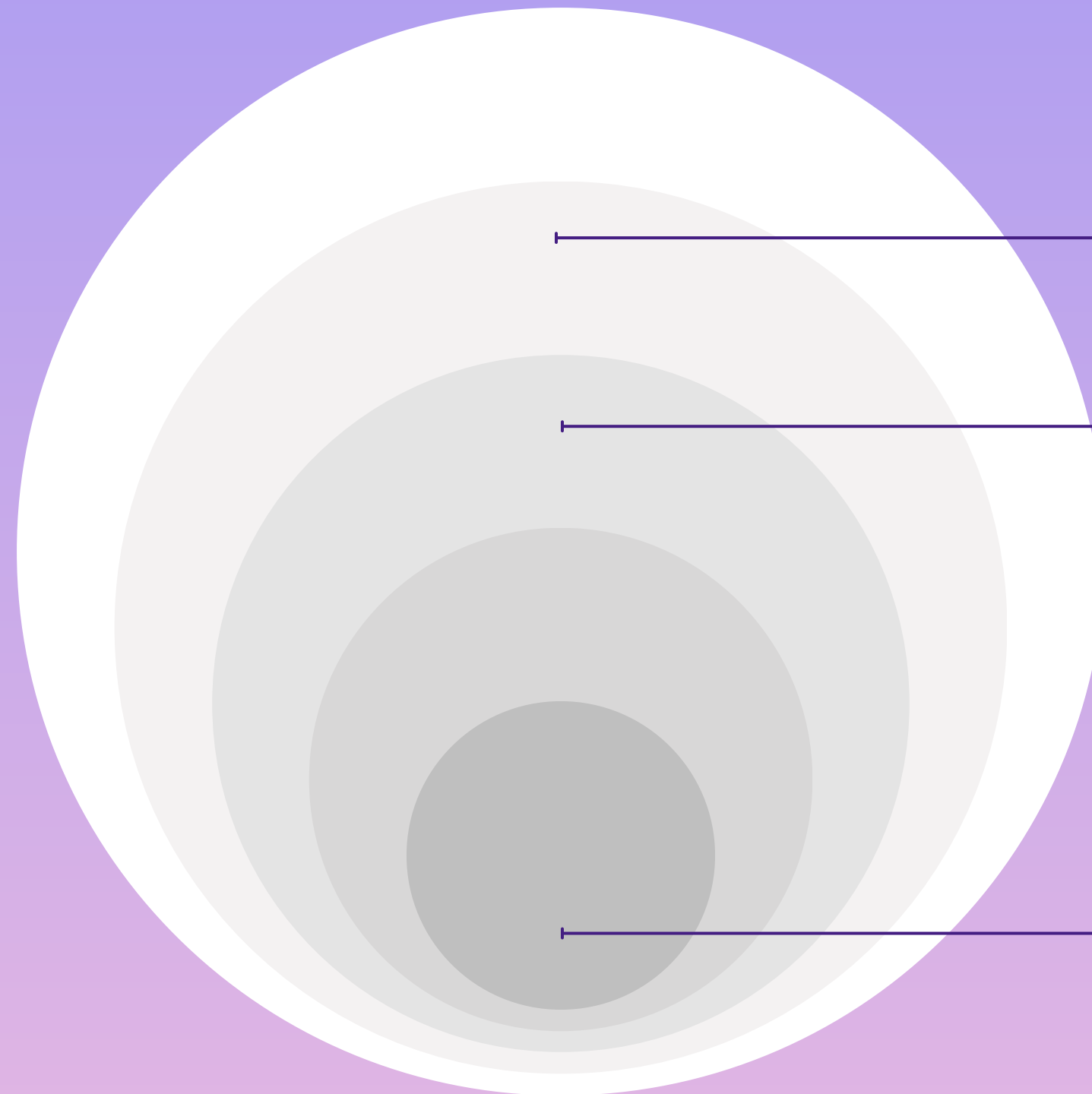


Testimony H.222

Office of Racial Equity
May 9th 2025







• Former Victim Specialist
for the City of Burlington

• Current Part-Time
States Attorney
Office Victim Advocate -
Caledonia County

• ORE/ DRJS Analyst -
Full Time





Key changes

H.222 gives courts a new tool against domestic violence by letting judges order people with relief-from-abuse orders to complete domestic violence accountability programs (DVAP)

**Court can
order DVAP
attendance**

**No criminal
penalty for
skipping
(currently)**

**Modern
stalking
definition**

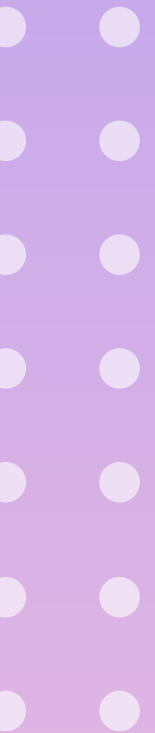
**Gender-
neutral
language**



Arguments supporting the bill

Domestic violence isn't taken seriously enough. H.222 may increase engagement in these programs.

The Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission has highlighted accountability programming as important.



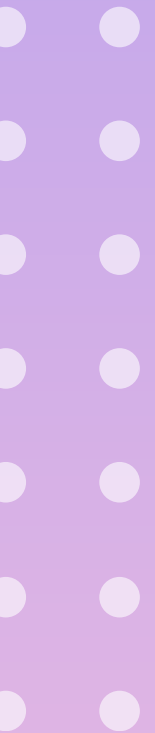
Arguments against the bill

It is not pedagogical to obligate people to learn. To be effective, education should be voluntary. Making DVAP mandatory does not mean people will learn & unlearn macho culture/patriarchy.

Complex implementation issues exist - people with multiple court cases can face contradictory requirements (like staying away from someone while under home confinement)

Open question/conversation. Why are people not going in the first place? Structural factors?

- Transportation issues
- Work schedule conflicts
- Lack of childcare
- Stigma or denial



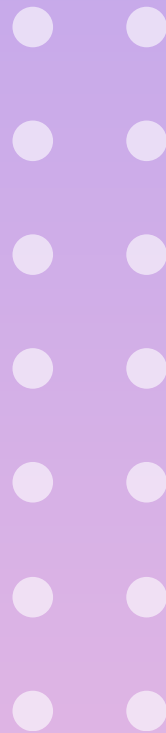
Office of Racial Equity's position

- Court can order DVAP attendance
- Criminal penalty for skipping
- Modern stalking definition
- Gender-neutral language

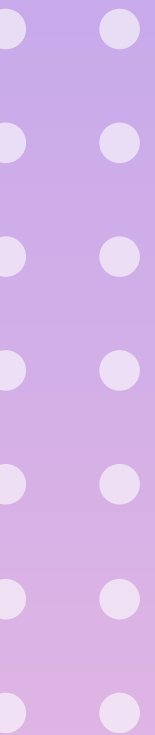
Oppose



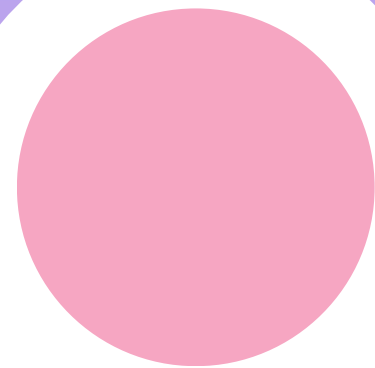
Support



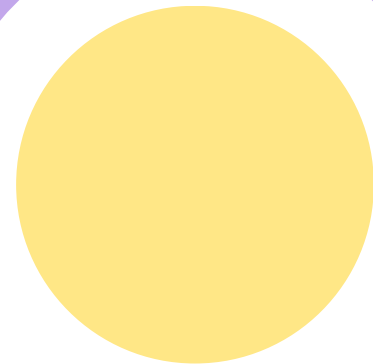
What are the structural roots of this problem? Systemic inequalities and power imbalances, particularly regarding gender



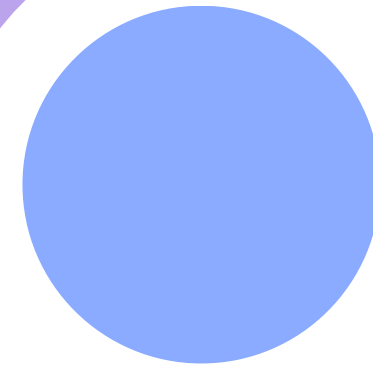
Systemic inequalities and power imbalances, particularly regarding gender



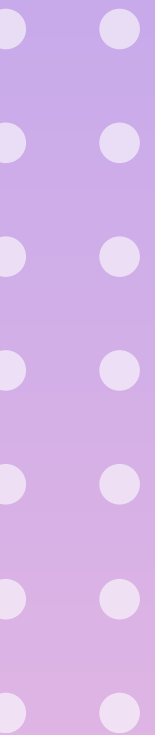
It reflects an unbalanced distribution of social, political, and economic power between women and men



Domestic violence is rooted in women's unequal status in society



Harmful cultural norms include traditional beliefs: A man's right to power over a woman, the idea of male superiority, or domestic violence is a private matter





The relationship between firearms and domestic violence in VT is lethal

According to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission (2025), Vermont recognizes firearm injury as a leading cause of domestic violence homicide. Firearms are heavily implicated in homicides in Vermont, both overall and in domestic violence-related homicides.

