



NEWS RELEASE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas Joins Texas Advocacy Project in Applauding U.S. Supreme Court Ruling

**FORT WORTH**—On June 21, the Supreme Court of the United States delivered a ruling in the case of USA vs Rahimi, upholding the constitutionality of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8), which prohibits individuals subject to domestic-violence restraining orders from possessing firearms. This case originated in Texas, highlighting the state's pivotal role in shaping national policy on domestic violence.

- *Two-thirds of women killed by an intimate partner are killed with a gun.*<sup>1</sup>
- *Access to a gun makes it 5x more likely that a woman will die at the hands of a domestic abuser.*<sup>2</sup>
- *Every month, an average of 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner.*<sup>3</sup>

We commend the Court for its decision, which prioritizes the safety and protection of domestic violence survivors across the nation. This ruling reaffirms the critical importance of firearm restrictions for individuals who pose a significant threat to their intimate partners. Restraining orders are a vital tool in safeguarding victims of domestic violence; the prohibition on firearm possession by abusers under these orders is an essential component of these protections.

In 2023, Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas (LANWT) joined Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) and a coalition\* of dedicated nonprofit organizations across the nation in filing an [amicus brief](#) in US v. Rahimi to advocate for the safety and protection of domestic violence survivors through appropriate firearm regulations. The brief, submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, addressed the Fifth Circuit's ruling and emphasized the importance of preventing individuals who have committed or threatened family violence from accessing firearms during the period they are under a protective order.

"This ruling is a monumental step forward in protecting the lives of domestic violence survivors in Texas and beyond," says Bronwyn Blake, Chief Legal Officer, TAP. "It underscores the necessity of strong legal measures to prevent abusers from accessing firearms, which are too often used to perpetuate violence. Our commitment to providing legal and social services to those in need remains unwavering."

Tom Stutz, Director of Litigation, LANWT, concurs. "The Supreme Court's common-sense decision today will keep guns out of the hands of domestic violence abusers. The Rahimi ruling provides a reasonable and solid constitutional basis for upholding the ban on weapons to those who are found to be a threat to survivors of domestic and family violence. This decision will not only prevent serious injuries but even save the lives of those affected by domestic violence."

In 2023, Texas Advocacy Project and a coalition\* of dedicated non-profit organizations across the nation filed an [amicus brief](#) in US v. Rahimi to advocate for the safety and protection of domestic violence survivors through appropriate firearm regulations. The brief, submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States, addressed the Fifth Circuit's ruling and emphasized the importance of preventing individuals who have committed or threatened family violence from accessing firearms during the period they are under a protective order.

The intersection of domestic violence and firearm access is well-documented, with numerous studies showing a significant increase in the likelihood of homicide when abusers have access to guns. Today's ruling is a crucial step in our ongoing efforts to protect survivors and prevent domestic violence-related fatalities.

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**About Texas Advocacy Project:** Since its beginning in 1982 as a legal hotline, Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) has evolved into an expert on legal and social issues affecting survivors of power-based abuse. TAP strives to end dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, and human trafficking in Texas. TAP empowers survivors through free legal and social services and access to the justice system, and advances prevention through public outreach and education. Our vision is that all Texans live free from abuse. In 2023, TAP provided legal and social services in 4,989 cases, serving 11,047 Texans. If you or someone you know needs help, call 800-374-HOPE or visit [TexasAdvocacyProject.org](https://TexasAdvocacyProject.org).

**Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas** is a nonprofit organization that strives to meet the civil legal needs of more than 1.5 million eligible clients in its 114-county service area covering the Panhandle and North and West Texas. The fifth-largest Legal Aid program in the United States, LANWT provides a wide variety of broad-based legal services to low-income clients including family law, wills and estates, disaster assistance, landlord/tenant matters, public benefits, real property, foreclosure prevention, and community revitalization matters.

\***The Coalition** is comprised of the following dedicated nonprofits across the country: Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc., Bay Area Legal Aid, Central California Legal Services, Community Legal Aid SoCal, Eastside Legal Assistance Program, Georgia Legal Services Program, Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Indiana Health Advocacy Coalition, Indiana Legal Services, Inc., Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, Legal Aid of Arkansas, Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Los Angeles Center of Law and Justice, Maryland Legal Aid, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, OneJustice, SAFE Alliance, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services Corporation, Southern Arizona Legal Aid, Inc., Texas Advocacy Project, Texas Legal Services Center, University of Texas School of Law Domestic Violence Clinic, Virginia Poverty Law Center.

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