



*Assemblymember Kansen Chu was elected in November 2014 to represent California's 25th Assembly District, which includes the Alameda County communities of Fremont and Newark, and the Santa Clara County communities of Milpitas, San José, and Santa Clara. Kansen Chu previously served on the San José City Council from District 4 for seven years and as a Boardmember on the Berryessa Union School District for four years. He is also a candidate for the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisor District 3 for the 2020 election.*

“Home is often a safe place for most of us, but for too many, that is not the case. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men are victims of domestic violence. The statistics are staggering, but believe it or not, these numbers are an improvement compared to previous years.

In California, there are ongoing efforts to address domestic violence by improving the reporting and trial process, providing more funding for support programs, increasing awareness campaigns, and focusing on prevention programs. These changes in law, increased funding, and amplified initiatives have resulted in more than 30 percent less in domestic violence related calls to law enforcement in the last decade. However, more needs to be done because even one person victimized is one too many.

In 2019, one of my biggest accomplishments in Sacramento was passing AB 800, a law to give survivors their day in court without jeopardizing their safety. One of the state-run programs to support survivors of domestic abuse is the Safe at Home Program. Survivors can enroll in this program to use an alternate address in public documents submitted to state, county and city government agencies. This allows survivors to keep their home addresses private and unknown to their abusers or potential abusers. AB 800 builds on this program and allows survivors to have any identifying information redacted in court documents including names, phone numbers, online usernames, and more. With this additional protection in place, survivors can access the court system without fear of being victimized again.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to pass laws at the state level. These crimes happen behind closed doors, in every neighborhood indiscriminately, and oftentimes to those least expected. It is important that we all listen, be aware, and learn to recognize the signs of domestic violence and report to the proper authority. One single call could help save a life.

Organizations like Maitri provides valuable safety nets for all victims, survivors, and those who want to be part of the solution. Their work positively affects many lives, and progress on addressing domestic violence would be impossible without service centers like Maitri.”