INTRODUCTION

- Globally & nationally, domestic violence (DV) & sexual violence (SV) are major public health concerns leading to physical, mental, and emotional health problems.
- 81% of women who experienced rape, stalking, or physical violence by an intimate partner reported significant short- or long-term impacts, such as post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms & injury. 93% of men report such impacts of their experiences.1
- DV & SV are costly to communities & societies. A press release indicated:
  - DV against U.S. women ages 18+ results in $18.5 million health care visits per year.
  - The annual cost in the U.S. of lost productivity due to DV is about $727.8 million
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RESULTS

DV & SV prevalence knowledge:
- Underestimated lifetime prevalence of DV & SV in adult men & women
  - 56.5% underestimated DV prevalence in women
  - 81.2% underestimated SV prevalence in women
  - 80.3% underestimated DV prevalence in men
  - 44.1% underestimated SV prevalence in men

DISCUSSION

Major conclusions:
- It is promising that legislators surveyed demonstrated significant agreement with progressive policies despite lack of understanding of statistical frequency.
- Those who did not agree with progressive policy identified the following actions necessary to advance progressive policy:
  - Education about how common DV & SV are in NH
  - Education about current DV & SV policies
  - Education about fiscal effects of DV & SV & benefits/savings inherent in prevention focused policy
- The extent to which DV & SV impact NH citizens is not fully understood by the legislators surveyed.

Limitations:
- Omitted two rape myths on rape myth scale due to researcher error
- Small sample size
- This study inquired into why legislators opposed progressive policies instead of also asking why they would support the policies

Implications for future research:
- Investigate how long in time office & average age predicts understanding of issues, effects perception of DV & SV, & effects policy decisions
- Ask legislators important issues to gain understanding of where DVSV policy ranks
- Inquire about difference between constituents’ perception & legislator’s perception in responses, religiosity, cultural heritage, & why they support or do not support progressive policies