

Submitter: Julie Martinez
On Behalf Of: Crook County Victim Assistance Office
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB2391

My name is Julie Martinez, and I am the Director of the Crook County District Attorney Victim Assistance Program and a victim advocate for 22 years. The Victim Assistance in our Rural community has been a big part of the District Attorneys Office. We reach a large population of victims ranging from Sex abuse, murder, Child abuse, child sex abuse, adult assault, juvenile crimes and property crimes. The Victim Assistance program is mainly funded by a Federal Grant. We are on a two year cycle for Federal VOCA funds. We don't know until the grant is about to be completed for that cycle how much we will receive each cycle. We fund 2 full time advocates as well as my position as a Director of the Program and I also carry a caseload. It would be detrimental to the program and the community if we would have to cut a position due to Federal VOCA funds shortage. The two Advocates in my program share very large caseloads and it grows everyday. Crime is not slowing down and victims need help to maneuver through the Criminal justice system with help from advocates. Funding historically has been a challenge for Victim Assistance Programs. HB 2391 DAVAP funding would be extremely beneficial to our programs.