

February 5th, 2025

Re: Support for Victims of Crime Act grants (HB 3196)

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of Call to Safety we are submitting testimony in support of HB 3196, which appropriates money to the Department of Justice to backfill reductions in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grants.

As the oldest crisis line in the State of Oregon we have been supporting people who have experienced domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and sex trafficking since 1973. We receive over 30,000 calls a year and also provide crisis line support to other organizations across the State. We also provide advocacy for sexual assault forensic exams for all of Multnomah County. Our organization provides services for nearly 37,000 points of contact every year and are critical in the web of services Statewide for D/SV, as we are the main point of entry and referral for many providers.

Background

In 1984, Congress signed VOCA into law and created the Crime Victims Fund (CVF). VOCA funding (appropriated from the CVF) is the primary source of federal grants for victim services, including services for survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, elder abuse, and other crimes. It supports victims in some of the most high-risk scenarios who are experiencing strangulation, stalking, and an increased risk of serious injury and homicide. **It also matches 75% of eligible state victim compensation funding.**

Impact

Programs across the state rely on VOCA funding to provide services, including Children's Advocacy Centers, District Attorney Victim Assistance Programs (DAVAPs), Community-based Nonprofit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (DVSA) Programs, and Campus Sexual Assault Programs. These grants fund vital services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, ranging from crisis intervention to long-term healing.

Our organization has significant VOCA funding, over 30% of our full organizational budget. We work with Universities, Colleges, Hospitals, local Police, Community Based Organizations, and are part of the Multnomah County's Coordinated Access System. We have hundreds of community partners that rely on our crisis line and crisis response services for their ability to run shelters, do legal advocacy, support groups, and housing to name just some of our referral work. Backfilling the VOCA cuts will help to stabilize our services for longevity. With so many of the government funds having reductions or instability, the need to ensure that our VOCA

funding will be stabilized for organizations like ours to continue our services and staffing levels consistent.

Bipartisan efforts are underway federally to create a long-term solution for the CVF, and your support in creating a bridge for organizations like ours to stabilize funding and our ability to offer life-saving services to survivors is essential. We know that supporting victims of crime is a nonpartisan issue, and these efforts will continue. There is a separate bill in the Oregon Senate to support a federal fix—[SJM 2](#) **Urging Congress to fund VOCA**.

For the above reasons, we urge you to support this request for bridge funding of VOCA grants by passing HB 3196. Crime victims, survivors and the staff that support them in Oregon deserve the safety and well-being that these funds afford. Organizations like ours that provide these services cannot continue delivering them without your support. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Betsy Glickman

Executive Director at Call to Safety