

February 6, 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 A Safe Place Family Justice Center, 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.

A Safe Place is a beacon of hope and healing for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and elder abuse. Our comprehensive, collaborative center provides wrap around services at no cost to those in need. Under one roof, we bring together critical partners including Clackamas Women’s Services, Clackamas County Sheriff’s Office, the Clackamas County District Attorney’s Office, Safety Compass, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Clackamas County H3S, the Oregon Department of Human Services, Abuse Recovery Ministry Services, Family SkillBuilders and Victim Rights Law Center, among others.

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.

A Safe Place relies on its core partners—Clackamas Women’s Services, the Clackamas County District Attorney Victim Assistance Program, and Safety Compass—to provide critical advocacy and support to survivors. Community-based advocates offer personalized, local support, ensuring survivors feel understood and connected to resources within their immediate

community. Systems-based advocates, on the other hand, guide survivors through the legal and judicial processes, helping them navigate complex systems and access protections. Together, these advocates form a comprehensive support network, ensuring survivors have the safety and resources they need throughout their journey.

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 and survivors 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,

Erin Henkelman
Director
A Safe Place Family Justice Center