

# Center for **HOPE & SAFETY**

February 6, 2025

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

On behalf of the **Center for Hope & 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.



Our mission at the Center for Hope & Safety is to provide a safe environment for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking and to educate the public about the issues surrounding victimization.

We operate programs that respond directly to the needs identified by survivors of violence and our philosophy reflects the survivors' right to receive information about abuse and their right to make their own choices from a wide range of options.

**Last year we had 38,000 contacts with survivors and our shelter provided over 10,000 nights to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking in Marion and Polk Counties.** We also have a housing program that has a 96% success rate in assisting families into permanent housing.

## **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.

**In the words of survivors we served:**

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605 Center St NE • Salem, OR 97301 • [hopeandsafety.org](http://hopeandsafety.org)  
503-378-1572 office • 503-399-7722 hotline

*because everyone deserves a life free of violence*

***“It’s an awful feeling finding yourself in the position to need your help, and I know people come and go but I just want to let each person here know that I am so grateful, because in my worst times when I have felt alone and lost and tired beyond reason – it is such a relief to have somewhere to go, someone to listen and someone to help remind me to breathe and put one foot in front of the other.”***

***“This program really made me feel stronger when I was at my lowest. Thank you so much for all the support you gave me and my kids and for giving us a safe place to grow.”***

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](#).

I know you have many requests before you this session and I hope you see that this investment in Domestic and Sexual Violence Service Providers in every county. I can tell you without a doubt, bridge funding for VOCA through HB 3196 is vital funding to deliver life-changing support to survivors.

Sincerely,

**Ashley Carson, Executive Director**

**Center for Hope & Safety**