



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 Northwest Family Services, 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. NWFS counts on VOCA support for our domestic violence services.

Northwest Family Services (NWFS) provides services to 20,000 people in the Portland and Salem metropolitan areas. We serve the most vulnerable folks with housing, behavioral health, health navigation, youth engagement, and basic needs. NWFS supports Oregon's only culturally specific women and children's domestic violence shelter. In the current environment, the need has never been greater.

**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.

Northwest Family Services provides domestic violence services, education, housing, employment support, navigation to a new life, mental health support, and ongoing connection for at least a year after the women are housed. Our services occur at Casa Esperanza (House of Hope), a scattered housing model for those who need other accommodations, and diversion services. This last year, NWFS provided intensive services to 100 women and their children who identify as Latina and 40 other households of various racial and ethnic who experience domestic and sexual violence.

A cut in VOCA funding would be a critical blow for the work supporting culturally specific services as well the myriad of services impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence..

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,



Rose Fuller  
Executive Director