

Submitter: Scott Davis
On Behalf Of: Clackamas Women's Services
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3196

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 Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) and Oregon survivors, I'm 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.

I'm the CWS Treasurer, and in that role, know that we can't deliver the services our survivors need without the financial support HB 3196 will provide. Our services are critical to support many survivors and their families each year, and include 24-hour crisis support phone line, emergency shelter, permanent housing, counseling, child advocacy and prevention education.

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.

VOCA funding is critical for CWS—if cuts occur, we will have to close our children's program or operations at the Safe Place Family Justice Center. I'm a Clackamas

County resident and know that too many of my fellow residents suffer the affects of domestic violence and sexual assault. We need to be ready to help people to break the cycle and the isolation that comes with it.

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,

Scott Davis
Treasurer, Board Member Clackamas Women's Services
Resident of Clackamas County