



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
OF LINCOLN COUNTY

April 25, 2025

Dear Co Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Paul Schrader, and I write on behalf of the Children's Advocacy Center of Lincoln County. We urgently request that the Legislature provide funding for Children's Advocacy Centers at Current Service Level this biennium. Children's Advocacy Centers receive their funding through the Oregon Department of Justice, Crime Victims and Survivors Services Division. We greatly appreciate AG Rayfield and his team's commitment to victims in this state. This agency is an incredible partner to Children's Advocacy Centers.

All 24 Oregon Children's Advocacy Centers, including the Children's Advocacy Center of Lincoln County, are facing a significant funding cliff that threatens children's access to the critical services that Children's Advocacy Centers Provide.

I urgently request your support of the below funding, which will provide for Current Service Levels for Children's Advocacy Centers:

- **HB 3196- \$18.5M to Backfill Federal Cuts to Victims of Crime Act (VOCA):** Children's Advocacy Centers and other victims services providers receive federal funding from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Following the close of the 2024 Session, Oregon was alerted that this federal funding is being reduced by 42%. All of the VOCA funds our center receives goes directly to pay a significant portion of the salaries of our Child and Family Advocates and the Coordinator of the Human Trafficking Task Force for Lincoln County. **Without your action, projected funding losses range from \$10,000 to \$498,000 per Children's Advocacy Center, with an average loss of \$122,794.**
 - HB 3196 (2025) provides \$18.5M in one-time dollars to backfill the cuts to the current grantees of the VOCA program, and provides \$3M for Court Appointed Special Advocates. Children's Advocacy Centers, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Programs, Campus Sexual Assault Programs, and District Attorney Victims Assistance Programs are all current grantees of the VOCA program and are facing 42% cuts.



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The Children's Advocacy Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, Federal Tax I.D. # 93-1097711

- **DOJ POP #327: Stabilizing State Dollars:** The 2021 and 2023 Legislatures allocated \$6M in funding to Children's Advocacy Centers to increase their capacity to serve more children. This funding was successful in increasing capacity, with most CACs using the funds to hire new staff. DOJ POP #327 ensures that this funding, as well as similar funding for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Programs continues at Current Service Level so that these critical staff and increased capacity can be maintained. These funds were critical in our ability to hire a pediatrician with training and experience in recognizing signs of abuse and neglect in children. This physician has enabled our center to provide medical exams at the center in a trauma informed manner, rather than at the ER by a nurse, physician's assistant, or physician who almost certainly lacks the requisite training on child abuse. Our center went for over two years without the ability to provide on-site medical exams after our previous provider moved out of state.

If these funds are not allocated, it will **drastically diminish** the capacity of CACs to provide **essential support**. These potential **cuts** will **leave many child abuse victims** without access to trauma-informed care and legal advocacy, resulting in **long-term psychological harm** and a **reduced ability** for our **justice system to protect our most vulnerable**.

The **effectiveness of police, prosecution, and child welfare agencies** is closely **tied** to the support provided by Children's Advocacy Centers. These **systems are interdependent**, and the work of **CACs is crucial in ensuring that child abuse cases** are handled **efficiently, effectively**, and with the best **interests of the child in mind**. When **CACs are underfunded**, the **strain is felt across all related systems**, leading to **diminished outcomes for child abuse victims** and **increased burdens** on already stretched resources.

Children's Advocacy Centers are at a critical juncture. Without funding from the Legislature to backfill cuts to federal funding (HB 3196) and Continued Service Level of existing state dollars (DOJ POP #327), we will see reduced staffing, increased wait times, fewer children receiving critical services, and delays in child abuse investigations. **I cannot overstate the urgency of the above funding requests.**

Thank you for your service to the State of Oregon and your support for Children's Advocacy Centers!



Paul Schrader

Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center of Lincoln County
Board Chair of Oregon Child Abuse Solutions



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