

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 18, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Speaker
of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries House
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker McCarthy, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

We are writing to alert you to an urgent need facing victim service providers across the country and to request that supplemental funding be provided to Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) programs. We applaud your support for victim services, as demonstrated through the passage of the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 (“VOCA Fix”). However, these efforts have not yet generated the baseline funding necessary for the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) to support victims across our country.

As you know, annual appropriations to VOCA are released from the balance of the CVF. The CVF is funded through penalties and fines imposed in federal crimes. Unfortunately, deposits into the CVF have sharply declined, leading to cuts in annual VOCA appropriations. Cuts to VOCA present a dire threat for many victims and their families.

The goals of VOCA are to provide direct financial compensation to victims and make funding available to local victim service providers assisting in counseling, emergency shelter, crisis intervention, and more.¹ In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, the appropriated funding level dropped to \$1.9 billion. In FY 2024, VOCA is expected to face another reduction in funding of a proposed \$1.2 billion in appropriations.² Without access to additional funding, the availability of victim services across the country will significantly decrease, and smaller providers that target rural, underserved, and low-income communities will suffer the most. While the VOCA Fix that Congress passed is improving the financial situation for the Crime Victims Fund, it will take time for the impact to be fully realized.

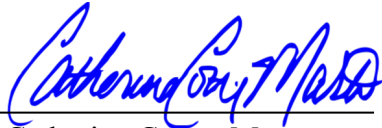
The significant reduction in funding currently being proposed will diminish the ability of victim

¹ "Crime Victims Fund, OVC Fact Sheet." Office for Victims of Crime. <https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/crimevictimsfundfs/intro.html>.

² "Summary of Requirements for Office of Justice Programs." Department of Justice. https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-03/3_ojp_fy_24_pb_technical_exhibits_mandatory_accounts_final_to_jmd_cleared_3.17.23.pdf.

service providers across the nation to maintain programs and resources. We therefore ask that you work to provide supplemental funding for VOCA, in conjunction with annually appropriated funds. We cannot afford to lose critical funding for victim services. We appreciate your engagement on this issue and encourage you to mobilize resources for the sake of the wellbeing of victims and their families across the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Catherine Cortez Masto", written over a horizontal line.

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jacky Rosen", written over a horizontal line.

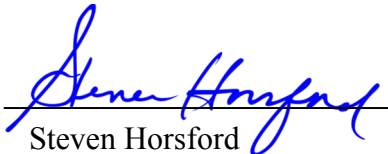
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dina Titus", written over a horizontal line.

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Susie Lee", written over a horizontal line.

Susie Lee
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Steven Horsford", written over a horizontal line.

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress