



National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund

FY 20 Request: Steady funding from the Crime Victims Fund that reflects deposits and fund levels. Fund tribal services. No additional transfers.

The Crime Victims Fund was created by Congress in 1984 to provide grants to state and local programs that assist victims of crime. The Fund is derived entirely from fines and penalties paid by federal criminal offenders, *not taxpayer revenues*.

From FY 2010 through FY 2014, the Crime Victims Fund collected an average of \$2 billion each year, but disbursed only an average of \$700 million per year. Congress raised the cap to \$3.04 billion for FY16. After transfers, \$2.6 billion was available for the states.

Congress should provide steady funding in FY 2020. Programs need sufficient funds released at a reliable pace that considers deposits and the health of the fund.

NAESV fully supports funding tribal victim services from the Crime Victims Fund, but we oppose any other earmarks or transfers from the fund.

Rape crisis centers rely on VOCA funds to provide direct services like crisis intervention, counseling, and court accompaniment to victims of sexual assault. Over 4,000 agencies, including over 1000 rape crisis centers, rely on VOCA assistance grants to provide critical direct services for over 3.4 million victims a year.

A 2018 NAESV survey of rape crisis centers revealed that over half have a waiting list for counseling services.

VOCA is making a difference.

As a result of the increase in the VOCA cap, many programs have now received an increase in VOCA funds. Programs have:

- Hired new advocates & increased wages to improve retention;
- Hired forensic nurses;
- Served more trafficking survivors;
- Opened satellite offices in rural areas;
- Reached more children; and
- Started support groups for youth & elders.

Responses from our 2018 Rape Crisis Center Survey on the impact of VOCA funds:

“The increase allowed us to place service locations in areas that would have previously required at least 2 hours of travel for services.”

“For us, just our ability to increase staff wages has been the biggest benefit. We need to be able to stop the revolving door and be able to retain the qualified people we have.”

“As a brand-new rape crisis center, it had been truly a boom to create opportunities in our local community. Our area has been economically depressed for some time, and in a small way our new center is helping to provide opportunities.”

Distributing steady funding to states from the VOCA fund in FY 20 will allow rape crisis centers to eliminate waiting lists, improve trauma-informed responses, and assist more survivors to heal and thrive.

HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? Contact Terri Poore,
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