



National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund

FY 18 Request: Release \$2.6 billion from the Crime Victims Fund. 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. The remaining \$6.5 billion difference was used as a budgetary offset.

Congress raised the cap to \$3.04 billion for FY16. After transfers, \$2.6 billion was available for the states. **Congress should fund the cap at \$2.6 billion in FY 18 which is the average of the past 3 years' deposits into to the Fund**—the same approach advocates have asked for in VOCA legislation.

While NAESV supports funding tribal victim services from the Crime Victims Fund, 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 2016 NAESV survey of rape crisis centers revealed that over half of rape crisis centers have a waiting list for counseling services.

HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Contact Terri Poore, terri@endsexualviolence.org.

“With a staff of only 4 full time victim advocates and two others in part time positions, it sometimes becomes challenging to meet the demands presented to us while serving ... a five-county service area. Crisis calls seem to come at times where the advocates already have overloaded client loads and have to prioritize or defer to other overworked advocates. These advocates also get paid the bare minimum for services to get called out to the hospital at 3AM or pay money out of pocket to offer a token of comfort to a victim.” Rape Crisis Center Director, 2016 survey

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:

- Reduced waiting lists for services;
- Hired forensic nurses, therapists, and advocates to answer the hotline;
- Served more trafficking survivors;
- Opened satellite offices in rural areas;
- Reached more children; and
- Started support groups for youth & elders.

“We now have a full-time staff person to coordinate our advocacy services in 11 hospital emergency rooms; we now can respond to requests from young people to offer counseling services on demand in their schools.” Rape Crisis Center Director, 2016 survey

Distributing \$2.6 billion to states from the VOCA fund in FY 18 will allow rape crisis centers to reach more survivors of campus and military rape, eliminate waiting lists, improve trauma-informed responses, and assist more survivors to heal and thrive.