



**National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2021

Contact: Terri Poore, terri@endsexualviolence

The VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 Introduced in Congress

Today, Senators Durbin (D-IL), Graham (R-SC), Baldwin (D-WI), Grassley (R-IA), Feinstein (D-CA), Cornyn (R-TX), Klobuchar (D-MN), and Murkowski (R-AK) and Representatives Nadler (D-NY-10), Fitzpatrick (R-PA-1), Jackson Lee (D-TX-18), Wagner (R-MO-2), Scanlon (D-PA-5), McMorris Rodgers (R-WA-5), Dingell (D-MI-12), and Moolenaar (R-MI-4) introduced the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021. This critical legislation will prevent devastating cuts to federal funding for victim service programs through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).

NAESV President Monika Johnson Hostler noted, “Over one thousand rape crisis centers rely on VOCA funds to provide direct services like crisis intervention, counseling, and court accompaniment to victims of sexual assault. The profound decrease in VOCA deposits is having devastating impacts on sexual assault programs leading to a true crisis for victims. We are so grateful to the sponsors of the VOCA Fix legislation for their leadership, and we urge Congress to enact this legislation swiftly.”

The situation is dire! Federal grants to victim services through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) decreased by 35% last year on top of a 25% decrease the previous year, and further drastic cuts are expected, because the non-taxpayer-funded pool of funding VOCA grants are pulled from is running dry. Congress can fix this by ensuring federal financial penalties from deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements are treated the same way as penalties resulting from criminal convictions - that they go to serve and compensate crime victims.

In addition to the fix to increase deposits into the VOCA fund, the legislation:

- Requires state VOCA Administrators to waive the 20% match requirement for victim service subgrantees for the pendency of the COVID-19 crisis and one additional year;
- Allows state VOCA Administrators to waive subgrantee match requirements at their discretion after the aforementioned waiver expires and requires state VOCA Administrators to develop and publish a policy and procedure for obtaining a waiver;

- Allows states to request a no-cost extension from the Attorney General, as allowed for other Department of Justice formula grant programs, to ensure states can thoughtfully and effectively distribute victim service grants without being penalized; and
- Provides flexibility for state compensation programs to waive the requirement to promote victim cooperation with law enforcement if good cause is established by the program.

Over 1600 organizations and government agencies signed a [letter](#) urging Congress to pass this legislation, and we need your help to make sure it becomes law quickly!

Please contact your Members of Congress and tell them to co-sponsor and support the VOCA Fix legislation. A toolkit with instructions on contacting your Members of Congress, call and email scripts, sample Tweets, an op-ed template, and other resources can be found [here](#).

###

The National Alliance to End Sexual Violence is the voice in Washington for the 56 state and territorial sexual assault coalitions and 1500 rape crisis centers working to end sexual violence and support survivors.

For more information, contact Terri Poore, Policy Director, at terri@endsexualviolence.org