

ADVOCATING FOR SURVIVOR SERVICES & PREVENTION WITH CONGRESS

NAESV DISTRICT ADVOCACY WEBINAR
APRIL 3, 2024

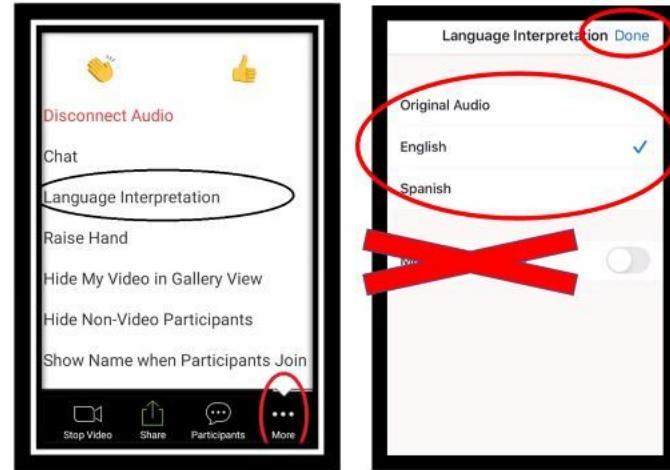


Interpretation Feature/ Función de Interpretación

On Computer – En Computadora



Mobile App – Aplicación Móvil



Do not select a language if you wish to hear/speak both
No seleccione idioma si quiere oír/hablar los dos

HELLO & WELCOME!

Monika Johnson-Hostler, President & CEO

Terri Poore, Policy Director

Ellen Fern, Policy Consultant

TODAY'S AGENDA

- What's in the **Toolkit**?
- Key Issues & Updates
- **Timeline** for Advocacy
- Advocacy 101
- Planning & Coordinating
- *Guest Speakers*
- Talking Points & Key Asks

2024 District Advocacy Toolkit

<https://endsexualviolence.org/advocating-congress-toolkit/>

Advocacy 101
Advocacy Timeline
Talking Points
Templates
Advocacy Report
Congressional Calendar
Informational Handouts



KEY ISSUES & UPDATES

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)
- Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP)
- Rape Prevention & Education Program (RPE)
- New Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative Proposed at HHS
- American Rescue Plan (ARP) Sexual Assault Funding for Rape Crisis Centers at the Family Violence Prevention & Services (FVPSA) Office



Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

- Crime Victim Fund formula grants non-taxpayer source of funding for most local victim services
- VOCA reduced to \$1.3b in FY24, states still experiencing significant cuts
- Deposits are increasing since the VOCA Fix Act passed, but not quickly enough.
- President's FY25 budget: \$7.3 billion in VOCA over several years, including \$2 billion added to VOCA each year



New Funds for VOCA

- Binance Settlement
- False Claims Act Revenue
- President's Budget Proposal

Rape Prevention & Education Program

- Formula grant administered by CDC through state health departments for sexual violence prevention
- FY24: \$61.75 million
- Requesting \$100 million in FY25
- President's FY 25 Budget: \$61.75 million



Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP)

- Formula grant (all states) created in VAWA (2005)
- Only regular federal funding source specifically for SA services
- FY24 funded \$78.5m (FY23 level)
- Requesting \$100 million for FY25
- President's FY25 Budget: \$90 million



HHS Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative

FY 25 Request: \$30 million

- Support comprehensive & collaborative service delivery for adult survivors of child sexual abuse & sexual assault survivors.
- Deepen capacity and technical assistance at the Office of Family Violence Prevention & Services.
- Discretionary grants to a geographically diverse group of community based sexual assault programs, including culturally specific and tribal programs, to enhance partnerships and healthcare system advocacy.



American Rescue Plan Sexual Assault Funds

- Historic \$198 million investment in relief funds for rape crisis centers at the Office on Family Violence Prevention and Services in 2021
- States have until the end of FY 25 to spend these funds (September 2025)



LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY TIMELINE

2024

APRIL

3

Prep Webinar,
4:00 PM EST

Hold Meetings

APRIL

24-25

APRIL

4-10

Request Meetings

Follow-Up Deadline

MAY

6

APRIL

11-21

Gather Materials &
Prep Call

Tour/Event Month

AUGUST

1-31

ADVOCACY 101

A Note on Lobbying

- Non-profit organizations CAN lobby
- Grant funds can't be used for lobbying
- Individuals CAN lobby
- Educating policy makers about your program (without taking a specific position) is NOT lobbying

What is Effective Advocacy?

What is Effective Advocacy?

- Effective advocacy relies on building trusted relationships with policymakers and their staff which takes time and requires consistency
- Advocacy is rooted in mutual respect and trust
 - Even if you disagree with a member, you want them to trust your facts and sources
 - This is the best foundation for educating--and ultimately persuading--policymakers

Requesting Your Meeting

- Locate your Member's district office locations.
 - Go to: www.senate.gov or www.house.gov to find your member and their website
 - Contact information can usually be found at the bottom of their website or under "contact" information
- Call the district office where you'd like to meet and ask who you should direct your request to and how they prefer receiving meeting requests.
 - For a Member meeting, you will most likely initiate your request through the scheduler in the district office
- Within 3-5 days of initiating your request, call the district scheduler to confirm they received it.
 - Following up is key!

Requesting Your Meeting

- For member level meetings, initiate your request **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.
- If the member is unavailable, the scheduler will likely connect you with a staffer who handles issues related to sexual violence.
 - It is perfectly acceptable to meet with staff
- If the scheduler does not connect you and you do not know the staffer who handles these issues, you can call the district office and ask who they recommend.

Planning Your Meeting

Who will attend?
Invite Influencers.

Designate roles:
Facilitator, notes,
talking points for
each person.

Prepare your
talking points &
your "ask."

Know your
audience:
Website, news,
high profile cases.

Normal Things to Expect

- Changes in who you're meeting with
- A brief meeting (especially with a Member)
- Change in or unexpected location
- Staff that you meet with may be young

Concluding Your Meeting



Ask if there are any questions.



End on a positive note and express thanks.



If you have been asked for follow up information, reiterate that you will get back to them as soon as possible.



Remind them that you would like to serve as a resource.



Invite the Member and/or staff to an upcoming event or to visit your program

Following Up



Send a thank you letter to each person who participated in the meeting.



An email is an appropriate format to follow-up with staff. For Members, a handwritten thank you is a nice touch.



In your follow-up, remind them of any commitments made during your meeting.



Use social media to share relevant information and thank them for action.



Attend and participate in local events such as Town Halls.



Keep in touch with relevant data and upcoming events!

GUEST SPEAKERS

Andre Lindsay | Professional Staff, Health/Human Services

Committee on Education and the Workforce
Ranking Member Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Elizabeth Newman, MPP | Public Policy Director

Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA)

The logo consists of a teal square with a white triangle in the top-left corner. To the right of the triangle, the words "END", "SEXUAL", and "VIOLENCE" are stacked vertically in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

END
SEXUAL
VIOLENCE

TALKING POINTS

Framing the Conversation

- Give the Representative, Senator, or staff member any supporting materials.
- Your story is the most important message you can share. Personalize the issue by talking about the needs in your state or district and the people you serve.
- By sharing the needs in your community and the difficulties you face meeting those needs, you paint a picture of the critical need for funding that relates directly to the Member's constituents.

Federal Funding: The Need & Its Impact

- Programs aimed at preventing and responding to sexual assault such as VAWA, VOCA, and RPE have been extremely successful in our community and across the nation.
- Many victims still have unmet needs, and we must continue to improve our responses to address and prevent the crisis of violence in many communities.
- The demand for services increases with high profile cases, national commentary, better outreach, improved response, and increased awareness.



Federal Funding: The Need & Its Impact

- According to a 2023 survey by NAESV, 40% of rape crisis centers experienced a decrease in funding; nearly 70% reported an increase in demand.
- In the past few years, demand for programs funded by the Rape Prevention & Education Program have skyrocketed; funded through the CDC, this is the primary source for prevention programming.
- With the VOCA crisis and American Rescue Funds ending in FY 25, sexual assault programs are facing a funding cliff.

Congress must act.



Tailoring Your Talking Points

It's important to connect the dots and drive home the point that sexual violence happens everywhere, including the communities they represent.

Use data and knowledge about your agency and the communities you serve.

How many survivors do you serve?

Do you have a long waiting list?
How long?

Are more people requesting services?

What are you seeing in your community?

The Specific Ask

Is Representative/Senator
_____ willing to support:

\$100 million for the Sexual Assault Services Program at the Office on Violence Against Women

\$1.9 billion in funding for the Crime Victims Fund at DOJ

\$100 million for the Rape Prevention and Education Program

\$30 million for HHS Sexual Demonstration Initiative

Social Media

- Be sure to share your visit on social media!
- You can use Twitter to thank your Member or post a photo on Facebook
- Example:
 - "Thank you @SenatorABC for meeting with (insert program name) to talk about critical funding for survivors of sexual assault."



THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

For more information, contact terri@endsexualviolence.org