

Save VOCA Letter Template to Congress

I am a constituent from (city/county/State) and I work for (local program/coalition) and I am urging (Senator/Representative X) to please take action to prevent a devastating \$700 million cut to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Victims and victim service programs in our community, such as Victim Support Services (VSS), will suffer greatly unless Congress acts.

Victim Support Services is the oldest Crime Victim Service Center in the Washington State, and one of the oldest in the Country. VSS is the only comprehensive Crime Victim Service Center that provides free advocacy services to all victims of general crime in the greater Puget Sound area. Key and services offered include:

- Immediate emotional support and counseling for victims in the aftermath of a crime.
- Assistance in managing trauma and stress reactions.
- Providing victims with information about their rights within the criminal justice system.
- Referring victims to relevant support services, legal assistance, and resources.
- Offering advocacy services to help victims navigate the criminal justice process.
- Assisting with the preparation of victim impact statements and court appearances.
- Helping victims apply for compensation for expenses related to the crime, such as medical bills, funeral costs, and lost wages.
- Collaborating with other organizations to provide comprehensive assistance.
- Conducting outreach and educational programs to raise awareness about crime prevention.
- Providing training to individuals and organizations on recognizing and addressing victimization.

The urgency of this plea cannot be overstated. If Congress allows this additional, drastic cut, Victim Support Services may have no choice but to close their doors after 49 years of service. They have already had to cut vital programs and unless something changes, victims and survivors risk further trauma and despair with no place to go to receive assistance.

We ask that Congress invest adequate resources to ensure level funding for VOCA in the final FY24 budget without cutting other programs that victims and survivors rely on.