

July 11, 2025

The Honorable Brent J. Cohen  
Acting Assistant Attorney General  
Office of Justice Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
810 Seventh Street NW  
Washington, DC 20531

Ms. Katherine D. Schmitt  
Acting Director  
Office for Victims of Crime  
Office of Justice Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
810 Seventh Street NW  
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Acting Assistant Attorney General Cohen and Acting Director Schmitt:

As you are aware, immediate publication of the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) victim assistance allocation tables, and prompt distribution of Fiscal Year 2025 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) formula grants, are critical to maintaining lifesaving services. With the FY 2025 program year already under way, having begun on July 1, 2025, states still cannot finalize budgets or disburse funds to providers that support survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and child abuse.

VOCA, established by Congress in 1984, channels criminal fines and penalties, not taxpayer dollars, to approximately 6,500 local organizations that reach more than six-million victims each year.<sup>1</sup> Persistent declines in deposits since 2018 have pushed the VOCA system to a breaking point. Despite these shortages, the Crime Victims Fund still holds more than \$4.6 billion in unobligated balances, resources that will remain out of reach until FY 2025 allocation tables are released.<sup>2</sup>

Across the country, providers now face unprecedented funding gaps. Nationwide, VOCA allocations have fallen nearly 50 percent since 2018, magnifying the strain on every state's victim service network. California has experienced a 67 percent cut in VOCA assistance since 2019, and in the same period, law-enforcement agencies logged roughly 18 domestic violence calls every hour, underscoring the scale of unmet need.<sup>3</sup> Wisconsin have seen its annual VOCA allocation plunge from roughly \$44 million to \$13 million, forcing shelters to lay off staff, limit beds, and in some cases pause medical-advocacy coverage.<sup>4</sup> In Tennessee, more than 360 victim-service nonprofits have petitioned the state for a \$25 million recurring fund after federal reductions left them on the brink of closure.<sup>5</sup> Compounding the crisis, recent staff removals and grant-cycle suspensions at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have frozen Family Violence

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<sup>1</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence, *Victims of Crime Act* (accessed June 18, 2025) (online at <https://nnedv.org/content/victims-of-crime-act/>).

<sup>2</sup> Office for Victims of Crime, *Crime Victims Fund (CVF) Weekly Balance Report* (Apr. 30, 2025) (online at <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/cvf-balance>).

<sup>3</sup> Public Policy Institute of California, *Reports of Domestic Violence Have Dropped, but Their Severity Has Gone Up* (Mar. 26, 2025) (online at <https://www.ppic.org/blog/reports-of-domestic-violence-have-dropped-but-their-severity-has-gone-up/>).

<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin Examiner, *Loss of Federal Victim Services Funding Leaves Wisconsin Agencies Scrambling* (Oct. 1, 2024) (online at <https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2024/10/01/loss-of-federal-victim-services-funding-leaves-wisconsin-agencies-scrambling/>).

Prevention and Services Act awards, making timely Office of Victim Services (OVC) disbursement all the more critical, and leaving organizations unsure whether promised dollars will arrive.<sup>6</sup>

July 1, 2025, marked the start of the FY 2025 program year, yet OVC has still not released the FY 2025 CVF allocation tables, which remain listed as “forthcoming.” Unless issued immediately, states will be unable to execute sub-awards on time.

To avert a nationwide service cliff, we request the following actions:

- Publish the FY 2025 state allocation tables and award notices without further delay.
- Award 100 percent of FY 2025 VOCA assistance grants by September 30, 2025.

Given the gravity of this national shortfall, and with vital survivor services hanging in the balance, swift federal action to publish state allocation tables and award notices is essential. Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter; we stand ready to work with you to ensure survivors receive uninterrupted support.

Sincerely,



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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Dave Min  
Member of Congress

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<sup>5</sup> Axios Nashville, *Victim-Services Nonprofits Ask State for Emergency Funding* (Mar. 5, 2025) (online at <https://www.axios.com/local/nashville/2025/03/05/victim-services-nonprofits-tennessee-emergency-funding>).

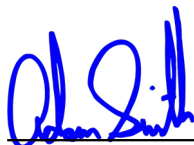
<sup>6</sup> The Blue Bench, *HHS Cuts Threaten Sexual Assault Prevention* (Apr. 15, 2025) (online at <https://thebluebench.org/about-us/media-center/blog.html/article/2025/04/15/hhs-cuts-threaten-sexual-assault-prevention>).



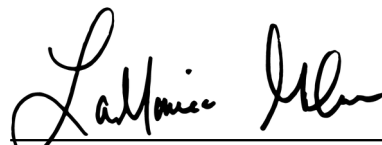
Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



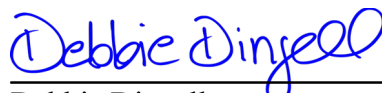
Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



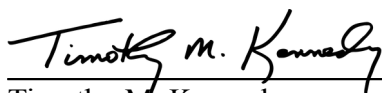
Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



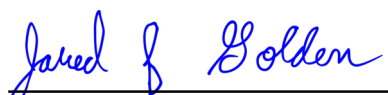
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



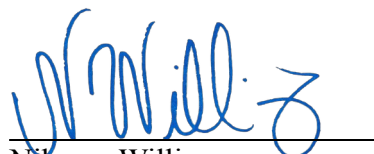
Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



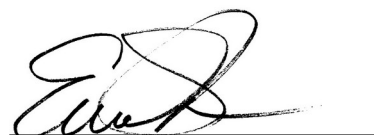
Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



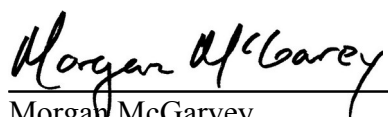
Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Emilia Strong Sykes  
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



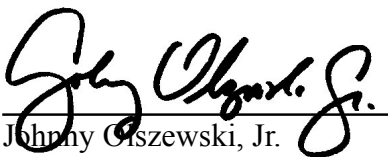
Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress

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Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.  
Member of Congress

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Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marilyn Strickland", written over a horizontal line.

Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Josh Gottheimer", written over a horizontal line.

Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress