



The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund

Enacted by President Reagan in 1984, the Victims of Crime Act created the Crime Victims Fund as a **non-taxpayer funding resource for services that help crime victims** cope with the trauma and aftermath of crime. More than 4,400 local agencies from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands, depend on the VOCA Fund assistance grants to **serve nearly 4 million crime victims each year**.

HOW VOCA WORKS

- **VOCA funds consist of fines and penalties collected from federal offenders NOT taxpayer dollars.** It assists any victims of a crime.
- VOCA funds are distributed to states to support crime victim compensation programs and victim assistance programs, among others.
- **Crime victim compensation programs** pay many out-of-pocket expenses incurred by victims as a result of crime, including medical and counseling costs, funeral bills, and lost wages.
- **VOCA-funded victim assistance programs**, such as rape crisis centers and domestic violence shelters, provide life saving services, support and guidance in the aftermath of violence.

"This program matches compassion with conservative fiscal responsibility." - Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK)

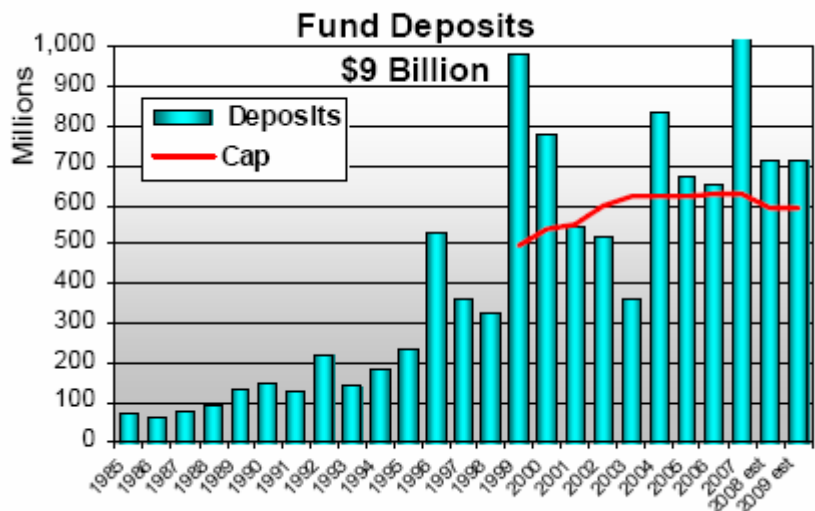
"I want to be clear: this is not taxpayer money. This is criminals paying for the system that they've created. Criminals are paying rent on the courthouse." - Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX)

VOCA IN DANGER

- The 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Act set the 2008 cap on Crime Victims Fund spending at \$590 million—state VOCA victim assistance grants are likely to be \$81 million less than last year.
- The Administration's FY 2009 budget request would set the cap at \$590 million, which cuts another \$53 million from the Fund and wipes out the entire Fund balance—which would mean there would be nothing in the Fund to support victim services at the start of 2010.
- The Administration's request would cut the 2009 victim assistance grants by 40% from 2006 levels.
- In order to merely maintain stable victim assistance grants, **we ask that the FY09 VOCA cap be raised to \$770 million.**

CONSEQUENCES OF CUTS TO VOCA

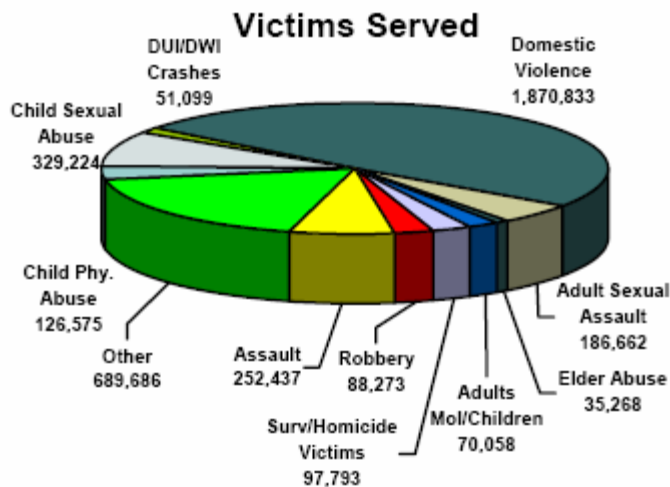
- **Without adequate funding for VOCA, programs in all 50 states and six additional jurisdictions will have to layoff staff, limit services, and discontinue services for special populations of victims, such as children.**
- Visit www.ncvc.org for more information on the impact of VOCA cuts to local programs.



WHO VOCA HELPS

VOCA-funded victim assistance programs **serve nearly 4 million crime victims each year.**

- These services help victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and drunk driving, as well as survivors of attempted homicide.
- VOCA provides funding for the Federal Victim Notification System.
- VOCA funds provide emergency relief to victims of terrorism and mass violence.
- VOCA funds are used for child abuse prevention and treatment grants.
- Local prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, and victim advocates are all eligible for funds.
- *Domestic violence and sexual assault victims make up half of those receiving services.* They receive this type of assistance through shelters and rape crisis centers and child abuse treatment programs.



“In every State and every community across the country, the Crime Victims Fund plays an essential role in helping crime victims and their families meet critical expenses, recover from the horrific crimes they endured, and move forward with their lives.” - Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT)

“The cuts may seem small, but they are forcing victim service centers across the country to close their doors because they can barely keep their lights on.” - Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX)

HOW TO SAVE VOCA

- ⇒ Contact your Members of Congress and tell them to reject the Administration’s budget request. Congress must PROTECT THE VOCA FUND BALANCE.
- ⇒ **Support a \$770 million VOCA cap that will restore stable funding to victim assistance grants.**
- ⇒ Write, email and call your Members of Congress. Contact information can be found by calling the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or at www.congress.org.
- ⇒ **Talk to the media about how your local programs rely on VOCA funds to help victims of crime and how VOCA funds are threatened.**

RESOURCES

For more information on VOCA , please contact the following organizations:

- The National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators www.navaa.org
- The National Center For Victims of Crime www.ncvc.org
- The National Organization for Victim Assistance www.trynova.org
- The National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards www.nacvcb.org
- Justice Solutions www.justicesolutions.org

You may also visit our website at www.naesv.org.