



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Statement by the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators
on the proposed federal budget agreement:

The National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators (NAVAA) blasted the proposed federal budget agreement for raiding a special fund created over 30 years ago exclusively to help victims of crime.

The agreement requires that \$1.5 billion be permanently taken out of the Crime Victims Fund, a special federal account composed entirely of fines and other monetary penalties paid by criminals convicted of federal crimes, not from U.S. taxpayers. Since it was created in 1984, the Crime Victims Fund has distributed \$14.6 billion to help victims of all types of crimes.

Congress originally required each year's Fund deposits to be used exclusively for victim services. However, since 2000 Congress has capped the annual distributions which created a Fund balance. Although the VOCA statute explicitly requires that all unobligated Fund amounts "shall remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years," for the first time, Congress is raiding the Crime Victims Fund by permanently canceling \$1.5 billion from the Fund to pay for other federal spending programs.

According to the Association's Board, "NAVAA recognizes and supports the need to increase federal non-defense discretionary spending for critical social and human services that depend on federal support. Unfortunately, the agreement does this in part on the backs of crime victims. This proposal sets a terrible precedent that violates the integrity of the Fund that Congress pledged 30 years ago would be used solely to help crime victims and opens the door to further looting of the Fund for any purpose whatsoever."

NAVAA represents the state and territorial agencies that administer U.S. Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) victim assistance grants that support direct victim services to millions of victims of all types of crimes throughout the nation. Some 3.5 million crime victims every year depend on the thousands of domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, child abuse treatment programs, child advocacy centers, prosecutor- and law-enforcement victim service programs, support groups for survivors of homicide victims, drunken driving crashes and all the other programs that receive VOCA funding. These funds come from the Crime Victims Fund which comes not from U.S. taxpayers but from fines and monetary penalties paid by criminals convicted of federal crimes.

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