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September 23, 2009

Via Facsimile

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable John Conyers
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Senators Leahy and Sessions and Representatives Conyers and Smith:

We, the undersigned Attorneys General, write to express support for, and ask for your help in passing, Senate Bill 1340 (companion, HR 3402). Also called the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009, the bill was introduced by Senators Patrick Leahy and Mike Crapo, and will increase the maximum amount of annual VOCA (Victims Of Crime Act) grants to states over the next five years.

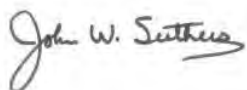
As you know, VOCA grants provide much-needed support to victims and victim service agencies throughout the nation. The grants are allocated through the Crime Victims Fund, a special account dedicated to providing services to crime victims and made up entirely of fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders. States receive these grants and administer programs providing compensation and education for victims, and training for law enforcement. Grants to state VOCA victim assistance programs fund services to more than 4 million victims of all types of crimes, including, domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, survivors of homicide victims, drunk driving crashes, stalking, identity theft, and elder abuse.

Because annual VOCA caps have not kept pace with the costs of providing victim services, states have been doing more with less. Likewise, because the caps have not kept pace with income to the Crime Victims Fund, the balance in the fund has risen to \$2 billion over the past two years. The Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009 will raise the cap on federal VOCA grants to \$705 million for fiscal year 2010, and then increase the cap by 23 percent each year through 2014. The standards and formula for allocating the funds will not change, and even with the increased caps, the Crime Victims Fund is projected to maintain a sustainable balance of at least \$800 million through 2014.

The funds available to provide victims services such as these have declined precipitously in recent years. Efforts are underway in the office's of VOCA state funds administrators to staunch that decline and to operate the Crime Victims Assistance and Prevention programming more efficiently. VOCA grants make up a large portion of this funding, and this reasonable and sustainable increase in federal support will help to ensure that we are able to continue to support victims at a high level and for years to come.

We urge you to preserve the intent of the offender-generated revenues and the assistance it provides to innocent victims by passing the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009.

Sincerely,



John W. Suthers
Attorney General of Colorado



Jon Bruning
Attorney General of Nebraska



Troy King
Attorney General of Alabama



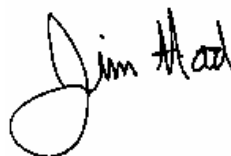
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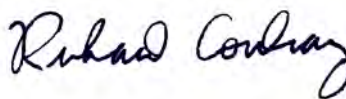
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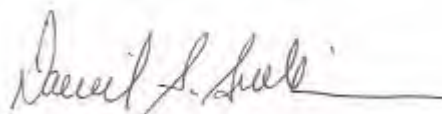
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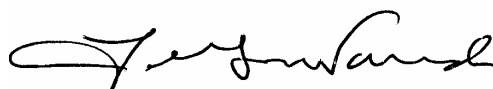
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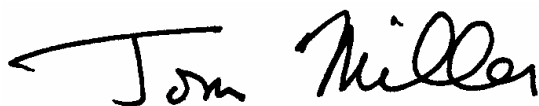
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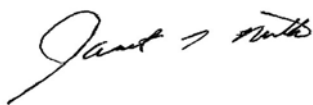
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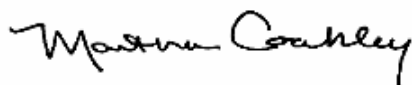
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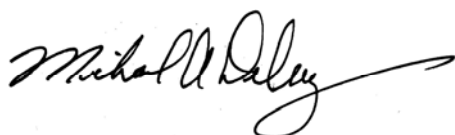
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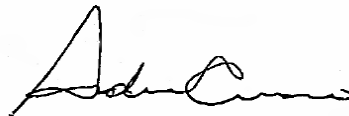
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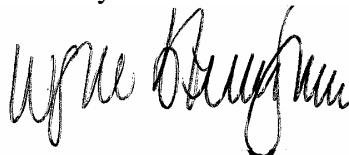
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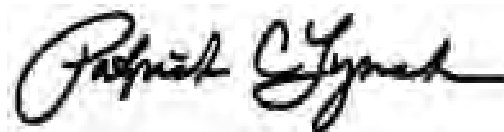
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