



CHAIRMAN JERROLD NADLER

Press Releases

Chairman Nadler Floor Statement in Support of H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021

Washington, March 16, 2021

Washington, D.C. - Today, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) delivered the following statement on the House floor in support of H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021:

"The 'VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act' would support vital victim service programs by preventing future cuts to already diminished federal victim service grants.

"Grants under the Victims of Crime Act, or VOCA, are the primary source of federal funding for thousands of victim service providers around the country, including programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, trafficking, and drunk driving. VOCA grants also fund victim compensation, including paying medical bills, covering lost wages, and paying for funeral costs.

"These critical grants are not taxpayer funded. Instead they are paid out of the Crime Victims Fund, or CVF, which is funded, in turn, through federal

criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments collected by U.S. Attorneys' Offices, federal U.S. courts, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

"Over the past several years, however, deposits into the CVF have dropped significantly, leading to corresponding cuts in grants to victim service providers.

"This is, in part, because the federal government has increased its reliance in recent years on deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements, the penalties from which are not deposited into the CVF. This legislation would shore up funding for this critical fund by requiring DOJ to deposit penalties from these deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements into the CVF, in addition to the funds currently deposited from other sources.

"Not only does this legislation ensure that the CVF is more financially stable, it would also make much needed improvements to victim compensation and services. For example, it would increase the statutory amount awarded to victim compensation programs and it expands the range of victims eligible for compensation.

"It also allows states to request a no-cost extension from the Attorney General, as allowed for other Department of Justice formula grant programs, to ensure that states can thoughtfully and effectively distribute victim service grants without being penalized.

"Other improvements include waiving matching requirements for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, plus one additional year, and additional discretion for the states, which administer VOCA funds, to further waive matching requirements, once this initial waiver period expires.

"All of these provisions would substantially improve the program's effectiveness and would enable it to offer more services to more people.

"I want to thank the Gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Fitzpatrick, the Gentledady from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee, and the other bipartisan cosponsors of this important legislation for their support.

"I also want to thank our colleagues in the Senate, including Senator Durbin, the lead sponsor, and Senator Graham, for their efforts to pass this bill in that chamber as well.

"This bipartisan and bicameral legislation ensures that programs and services assisting victims of crime are fully funded and are better supported, with no new taxpayer dollars. I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time."

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