



FY 2007 Appropriations Fact Sheet Violence Against Women Act and Victims of Crime Act Fund

Last year, Congress unanimously passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005, which continues successful and lifesaving programs, while also taking the next steps to end sexual and domestic violence. VAWA 2005 brings together *existing* resources to create new collaborations that *efficiently* deliver services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, continuing the progress that was begun with VAWA 1994 and 2000.

Department of Justice administered programs have increased training for police, prosecutors, and court officials, greatly improving the response of the criminal justice system to victims of domestic violence and leading many more victims to seek services in order to escape violence. As a result, demand has steadily risen for the emergency shelter, hotlines, and supportive services administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. **In order to effectively intervene and prevent domestic and sexual violence, Congress must fund both DOJ and HHS programs at the levels authorized in VAWA 2005.**

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)

- FVPSA funding for battered women's shelters and services provides life-saving emergency shelter, crisis lines, counseling, victim assistance, and programs for underserved communities.
- In the FY '06 Congressional budget, FVPSA Programs/Shelters received \$126 million in appropriations – \$49 million below the authorized level of \$175 million. This funding simply does not meet the need for emergency services; every day shelters and service providers must turn away families in danger due to lack of resources.
- Recognizing the need for specific services for children, Congress passed the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, which amended FVPSA to provide a portion of all appropriations above \$130 million to programs serving children who witness domestic violence, a priority of the Bush Administration.
- To meet the increased demand for core services and break the cycle of violence through children's initiatives, Congress should fund FVPSA programs at \$175 million in the FY '07 Congressional Budget.

Long-Term Stability/Housing for Victims

- The Long-Term Stability/Housing for Victims Program is a pioneering \$10 million program that builds collaborations between domestic violence service providers and housing providers and developers to leverage existing resources and create housing solutions that meet victims' need for long-term housing.
- Helping victims remain safe and stable over time is critical; victims of domestic violence often return to their abusers because they cannot find long-term housing.
- Fully funding this program at \$10 million for FY '07 is an important investment in victims' long-term stability.

Grants to Combat Violence Against Women/STOP Grants

- Grants to Combat Violence Against Women fund shelters, police officers, prosecutors, judges, courts, and other state and local programs, and are the single largest source of funding for states to address domestic and sexual violence on a local level.

- Grants to Combat VAW were cut by \$16.2 million in the FY '04 Congressional budget, from \$184.5 million to \$168.3 million. The FY '05 and FY '06 Congressional budgets increased funding for Grants to Combat VAW to \$187.1 and \$187.3 respectively, but included earmarks for the separately authorized Transitional Housing Program and several unauthorized programs. Because of these earmarks, STOP Grants have been cut by \$17.6 million since FY '03.
- To ensure that funding cuts do not reverse the progress we have made toward ending domestic violence, **Grants to Combat Violence Against Women/STOP Grants should be fully funded at \$225 million.**

Transitional Housing

- The Transitional Housing program, authorized as a separate line item in VAWA 2005, is a critical bridge between crisis intervention and long-term stability for many battered women and their children.
- Without such housing resources, many families face homelessness after they leave emergency shelters; more than 50% of homeless women and children are homeless because they are fleeing domestic violence, and 38% of all victims of domestic violence will become homeless at some point during their lives.
- As a separately authorized and desperately needed program, **Transitional Housing should be fully funded at \$40 million and given its own line item** in the Congressional Budget.

Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Grants

- VAWA 2005 reauthorized \$55 million for the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Grants, which are designed to fund cooperative efforts between law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim services; to provide treatment, counseling and assistance to victims; and to work with rural communities to develop education and prevention strategies.
- In the FY '06 Congressional Budget, Rural Grants were funded at \$39.2 million. New for FY '07 are eligibility for rural areas in 31 non-rural states and dedicated funding to address sexual assault.
- **Without increased funding for Rural Grants, programs currently supported by this funding may have to close their doors.**

The Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA)

- The Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA) is a vital, non-taxpayer funding source for services that help victims cope with the trauma and aftermath of all types of crime, including sexual and domestic violence.
- More than 4,400 local agencies from all 50 states depend on VOCA assistance grants to serve over 4 million crime victims each year – a number that grows yearly.
- The President's Budget again proposes to rescind the entire balance of the VOCA Fund, a move that was defeated soundly by Congress last year. **Congress must protect the Fund for future generations.**

We thank Congress for supporting victims of domestic and sexual violence through the reauthorization of VAWA 2005 and through continued funding for these lifesaving VAWA and VOCA programs.

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