

Attorney General Raoul Co-Leads Bipartisan Coalition Urging Congress To Stabilize Funding To Support Victims Of Crime

February 8 2024 11:07 AM



CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul, with Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost, Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond and Wisconsin Attorney General

Joshua L. Kaul, co-led a bipartisan coalition of 42 attorneys general urging the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to authorize needed 2024 bridge funding for the federal Crime Victims Fund (VOCA Fund).

The VOCA Fund supports essential direct services for crime victims and survivors across the country. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime has projected fiscal year 2024 funding for victim service grants will be \$700 million lower than fiscal year 2023. In their [letter](#) to congressional leaders, Raoul and the attorneys general call on Congress to authorize short-term funding to prevent severe cuts.

"I am committed to supporting survivors and doing all we can to prevent violent crime in Illinois," Raoul said. "These services help survivors overcome the trauma they've endured and get their lives back on track. This support is critical for public safety, and that is why I am urging Congress to approve short-term funding for the federal Crime Victims Fund."

The VOCA Fund was established by the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, and it is the primary financial source for victim services in all 50 states, five U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. The VOCA Fund supports medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, courtroom advocacy and temporary housing for victims and survivors of crime. It also helps to fund federal, state and tribal victim service programs, crime victim compensation, discretionary grant awards, victim specialists in U.S. attorneys' offices and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the federal victim notification system.

VOCA Fund revenue is generated from offenders convicted of crimes, not from taxes. In 2021, Congress passed the VOCA Fix Act, which allows monetary recoveries from federal deferred prosecutions and non-prosecution agreements to replenish the fund. While passage of the VOCA Fix Act was necessary, it did not provide a fully-sufficient funding solution. VOCA funding for 2024 crime victim service programs is anticipated to be 41% lower nationwide when compared to 2023 grant awards.

Without prompt action by Congress, victim service programs across the country may be at risk of closing. In Illinois, providers could be forced to drastically scale back the services they offer to victims.

Today's letter is part of Raoul's ongoing efforts to support victims and address violent crime throughout the state. The Attorney General's Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services Division helps victims and families on their road to recovery with trauma-informed, statewide programs and resources. For additional information on

services for crime victims or to report a violation of victims' rights, please call the Attorney General's Crime Victims Assistance Line at 1-800-228-3368 or visit the [Attorney General's website](#).

Joining Attorneys General Raoul, Yost, Drummond and Kaul in sending the letter are the attorneys general of Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming.