

March 4, 2013

Senator Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Co-Chair
Members, Ways & Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

Re: Oregon Domestic & Sexual Violence Service Fund (ODSVS) in the DOJ Budget (HB 5018)

Co-Chairs & Members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety -

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence advocates on behalf of the community based, non-profit domestic and sexual violence programs of which there are more than 50 across the state. Our undertaking is to support the local programs through providing technical assistance; public education, training and supporting coordinated community response. We strive to ensure that the voices of domestic and sexual violence survivors are heard, and that their experience informs the work we do.

There are Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalitions in every one of the 50 states and U.S. Territories. Only 15% of these Coalitions in the nation did not report an increase in demand for services. This rings true for Oregon as well. Some programs are on the tipping point—reducing services or considering closing altogether.

- \$16.8 Million year is needed just to meet minimal emergency need; less than half that amount is available.
- In the last decade, more than 206 Oregonians have died due to Intimate Partner Violence—almost 70% of the deaths (140) happened in the last 4 years.
- A recent CDC study found that Oregon has one of the highest rates of sexual assault in the nation.
- Oregon's Children witness 33% of intimate partner physical assaults. (ODHS 2005)
- In 2011, over 20,500 requests for emergency shelter from violence couldn't be met in Oregon. That's more than 2 unmet requests every hour—every day—of the entire year.

Domestic and Sexual Violence Services are lifesaving community-based programs, providing emergency shelter and housing options; safety planning; counseling and support groups; medical accompaniment; and legal advocacy. The reach and impact from these vital services are apparent throughout the communities you come from.

A recent Johns Hopkins study found that these non-profit domestic and sexual violence services reduce re-assault by nearly 70%. The Domestic and Sexual Violence Programs throughout Oregon, including Tribal Communities, strengthen the community by not only assisting victims as they face the trauma inflicted upon them but by also by participating as a critical part to the multi-disciplinary response.

We are asking you to fund a vital component of the comprehensive solution. Please add an additional \$4 million to this fund when you are crafting and recommending this budget. The cost of not doing so is simply too great and the opportunity is here.

Sincerely,

Keri L. Moran-Kuhn
Director of Programs