



# Domestic Violence Services, Inc.

*Serving Umatilla and Morrow Counties since 1977*

*P.O. Box 152, Pendleton, OR 97801*

*541-276-3322 • fax 541-276-8958*

---

February 24, 2023

*Re: \$16 Million in the Department of Justice Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division Budget (SB 5514) for:*

- \$10 Million to the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (HB 2933) for confidential safety and support services*
- \$6 Million to the Survivor Housing Fund (HB 3018) for housing assistance for survivors*

Co-Chairs Sollman and Evans and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety,

On behalf of Domestic Violence Services, Inc., we are pleased to submit testimony in support of funding in the Department of Justice Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division Budget (SB 5514) of \$10 million to the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (ODSVS) Fund for personal safety planning and support services for survivors and \$6 million to the Survivor Housing Fund (SHF) for housing assistance for survivors. Both of these amounts were allocated as one-time funding during the pandemic, and we seek to continue these programs as ongoing and stable services designed to meet a critical need.

Domestic Violence Services, Inc. is a community-based nonprofit. Our service area is Umatilla and Morrow Counties. These counties are frontier and rural, so the need for ODSVS and Survivor Housing Funds are each essential funding sources that allow domestic and sexual violence services to ensure that survivors have access to confidential, culturally specific, and trauma-informed support and assistance as they seek safety from abuse.

***\$10 Million to Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (ODSVS) in the CVSSD Budget (This funding is also requested in a stand-alone bipartisan bill, HB 2933)***

The Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (ODSVS) distributes funds to more than 60 community-based, culturally specific, and Tribal programs across the state of Oregon to provide confidential trauma-informed services for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking dating violence, and human trafficking. These community-based nonprofits support children and adult survivors with wide-ranging crisis intervention and long-term supportive services such as emergency shelter, 24/7 crisis line, legal advocacy, emergency and long-term safety planning, counseling, support groups, and children's programs. These programs also provide prevention education in schools and training and education throughout the community. Community-based domestic and sexual violence programs intersect with many state



# Domestic Violence Services, Inc.

*Serving Umatilla and Morrow Counties since 1977*

*P.O. Box 152, Pendleton, OR 97801*

*541-276-3322 • fax 541-276-8958*

---

systems, including the public health and public safety systems. These programs have built collaborations with law enforcement, healthcare providers, schools, the criminal justice system, social services agencies, and many other community partners. They offer critical support for survivors navigating these structures.

These funds will and have helped to maintain two much-loved shelters and gave survivors much-needed assistance to safe housing. As housing costs skyrocketed in the past year, many survivors struggled to retain or obtain safe housing.

ODSVS is the only state general fund source of support for these critical services. The need for these supportive services continues to grow, and staffing shortages, lack of funding, and other obstacles challenge the burden of essential service provision. We support investing \$10 million in the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund to help programs across the state continue to provide necessary and lifesaving services.

***\$6 Million in Oregon Survivor Housing Fund (SHF) in the CVSSD Budget (This funding is also requested in a stand-alone bipartisan bill, HB 3018)***

The Oregon Survivor Housing Fund (SHF) distributes funds to more than 60 community-based, culturally specific, and Tribal programs across the state of Oregon to facilitate access to safe and stable housing for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking dating violence, and human trafficking. Survivor Housing Funds are a crucial component of the efforts to assist survivors in their journey toward stable, permanent housing. Survivors often face episodes of homelessness due to the violence, safety issues, and/or isolation caused by the abuser, and they usually have few or no resources available when fleeing.

According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence 2021 Annual Domestic Violence Court Report, Oregon's domestic and sexual violence hotline staff received 475 contacts, averaging nearly 20 touches per hour in the one-day count. During that time, victims made 127 requests for services—including emergency shelter, housing, transportation, childcare, legal representation, and other support needs—those programs could not provide because they lacked the resources. Approximately 80% of these unmet requests were for housing and emergency shelter. In 2019 and 2021, the Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women survivor priority survey found that permanent, affordable housing is the greatest need facing survivors of domestic and sexual violence in our state.

Oregon Survivor Housing Funds (SHF) have been instrumental in supporting survivors and their families to find safe and permanent housing amid a statewide housing shortage, rise in rent costs, and current inflation. The SHF supports survivors by



# Domestic Violence Services, Inc.

*Serving Umatilla and Morrow Counties since 1977*

*P.O. Box 152, Pendleton, OR 97801*

*541-276-3322 • fax 541-276-8958*

---

providing supportive services and the financial assistance resources necessary to address barriers to accessing housing. This may include moving assistance, application fees, security deposits, and other non-rent move-in costs. These critical and flexible funds help survivors begin this new life stage on solid footing.

We support an investment of \$6 million in Oregon Survivor Housing Funds to end housing instability for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking.

**In closing, \$16 million in long-term stable funding for ODSVS (\$10 million) and SHF (\$6 million) funding**, administered by DOJ's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division (CVSSD), will provide programs with the resources to develop capacity further and build a statewide infrastructure designed for sustainability and equity in meeting the needs of survivors. Continuation of this one-time funding is necessary to stabilize programs, meet the rising demand for safety services, and offer wages designed to recruit and retain skilled workers and administrators.

For the above reasons, we hope you will support an ongoing investment of a \$10 million increase in ODSVS funds and a continuation of \$6 million in Survivor Housing Funds in the CVSSD Budget. Total funding of these services is essential to support crime victims and survivors in Oregon and the organizations and providers who serve them. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Robbin R. Ferguson  
Executive Director