

OREGON ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT TASK FORCE



SUPPORT FUNDING FOR CRIME VICTIM AND SURVIVOR SERVICES IN THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUDGET SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES

APRIL 7, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shannon Rose and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force to urge support of funding for the specialized programs that support survivors of domestic and sexual violence and their children in the Department of Justice Budget's POP 327 and in HB 3196.

Formed in 1999 by then Attorney General Hardy Meyers, the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (or Oregon SATF) is a statewide, nongovernmental nonprofit. Our mission is to facilitate and support a collaborative, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence.

In our position as a statewide program working collaboratively with survivor service organizations in all 36 counties, we have a macro-level view of the landscape of these services and can unequivocally state that if these funds are cut, survivors of sexual and domestic violence will pay a high price. The programs funded in POP 327 and in HB 3196 provide some of the most needed and critical resources for individuals, families, and children in crisis, including safe and confidential shelter, access to skilled advocates to support with safety planning, unbiased and supportive connections to other resources, including restraining orders, transportation, physical and mental health care. Through our role as a training, technical assistance, and systems advocacy provider, we see when these programs save lives, and we also see the devastation of what can happen when resources are insufficient to meet our community's needs. Funding these services are critical to prevent the latter.

The two packages outlined below are of critical importance to the lives of survivors and their children:

Department of Justice Budget POP 327: ONGOING FUNDING TO STABILIZE CRITICAL SURVIVOR SERVICES PROGRAMS (\$22M)

Please ensure the inclusion of \$22 million in grant funding in the Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division (CVSSD) of the Department of Justice for Tribal, culturally specific, and community-based programs to continue providing confidential services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking across the state. Without this investment into ongoing funding, programs will be forced to lay off staff and will have reduced capacity to provide critical life-saving safety and advocacy services for survivors and their children.

- **\$10 Million for ODSVS:** These funds provide support for the network of confidential, trauma-informed, community-based and culturally-specific programs providing shelter, safety planning, hotline, and advocacy services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence (DSV) and their children across the state.
- **\$6 Million for the Survivor Housing Fund:** Survivor Housing Funds allow DVSA service providers to empower survivors in the next step of accessing safety from violence. These funds increase the chances at long-term stability and safety for survivors and their children. As Oregon's housing affordability crisis continues to reach new peaks, the Survivor Housing Funds are necessary to make it possible for victims to escape the cycle of abuse, and to establish stability for themselves and their children.
- **\$6 Million for Children's Advocacy Centers:** CACs are the state's mandated and unique resource for the assessment, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect and the associated trauma, in order to promote health and hope in children, youth, families, and communities.

These investments are necessary to continue current levels of survivor services that were finally brought up to baseline minimal access levels in 2019 thru one-time investments. In 2024, the Legislature recognized the

importance of this increased capacity and unanimously passed HB 4140, which stated that these funds are to be considered current service level moving forward. If these investments are not continued, survivor services in communities across the state will suffer significant cuts. POP #327 cements the continuation of these funds.

HB 3196: One-Time Funding to Prevent Cuts to Interdisciplinary Victim Services Programs (\$18.5 Million)

The Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) is the primary source of federal grants for victim services, including services for survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, attempted homicide, and other crimes. Oregon was notified of the 42% in federal funding cuts following the close of the 2024 short Session. We need a one-time investment to continue important partnerships between service providers, prosecutors, law enforcement, and others serving victims of crime in every county in the state.

At Oregon SATF, we know the importance of linking effective response services to effective prevention services. Both are critically important to improving safety and reducing violence. **Fully funding the critical services for response in the Department of Justice budget will support communities where survivors will have what they need and we can continue to move towards upstream efforts to prevent the need for these services in the future. When survivors are heard, supported, and resourced, we are all in a better position to enact preventative solutions for future generations.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon Communities.

Sincerely,



Shannon Rose
Executive Director
Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force