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We believe that everyone deserves to live a life free from violence.

April 14, 2025

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

My name is Ariel Cooper and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Raphael House of Portland 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.

During my time as a Primary Advocate at Raphael House, I have seen survivors utilize these funds in various ways to improve their lives as they recover from the harm they have endured from domestic violence. In addition to the complex trauma they have, many survivors come to us with property debt, others come in need of culturally specific support, and some come with legal needs. These funds directly affect each survivor's access to all of these services and more. This money is critical in order to continue our mission of serving survivors and supporting their array of needs effectively.

The Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division of the Department of Justice provides critical safety net services and programs that can quite literally save the lives of survivors and their children fleeing violence and seeking safety and security.

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

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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.

Receiving this funding will ensure that we can continue to provide confidential, trauma informed care as we support survivors on their journey to safety.

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

Sincerely,



Ariel Cooper
Primary Shelter Advocate
Raphael House of Portland