

Good afternoon, Chairpersons and Members of the Committee.

My name is Vicki Korpi. I am a mother, an educator, and a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I am speaking today in support of continued funding for community corrections. I speak today not only from personal experience but on behalf of countless individuals whose lives have been impacted by trauma, violence, and the systems designed to support them.

As a survivor, I can attest that the path to healing is neither quick nor linear. It requires stability, support, and above all, the presence of people who are trained to understand the deep and lasting effects of trauma. Victim advocates are essential in this regard. They serve as critical guides for individuals navigating the complex legal and emotional terrain that follows victimization. Their work helps survivors regain a sense of agency, dignity, and hope. That kind of support is not optional. It's essential. Victim advocates are often the only bridge between survivors and a justice system that can feel cold and overwhelming. Without them, many of us would fall through the cracks.

And the work doesn't end when a case is closed. Survivors like me continue to interact with the justice system for years—often through parole and probation. When those officers are properly trained in trauma and victim sensitivity, it makes all the difference. They can recognize warning signs. They know how to communicate in ways that don't retraumatize. They help keep us safe—not just by monitoring offenders, but by understanding what survivors need.

That kind of understanding isn't automatic. It comes from training—training that helps officers see victims as people, not just paperwork. It helps survivors feel safe again.

We need that safety. We need that support. And we need continued funding to make sure no survivor is left to navigate the aftermath alone. Cutting funding to these programs doesn't just save dollars. It costs lives, it costs healing, and it costs justice.

So I'm asking you today, as someone who has lived through what happens after sentencing—please continue funding for victim advocates. Please invest in training for parole and probation officers. Because justice doesn't end with a verdict. For us, that's where the need for support truly begins.

Thank you.