

Submitter: Alejandra Tapia
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

April 17, 2025

Policy Option Package 327 and HB 3196

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Co-Vice Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

I urge you to pass two pieces of legislation. The first is the Department of Justice Budget POP# 327 that will provide ongoing funding to stabilize critical survivor services programs (\$22M). This will maintain the same funding levels as in past years to ensure survivors of interpersonal violence can access the support they need and deserve, including crisis intervention, emergency shelter, safety planning, and advocacy.

The second is HB 3196, which will backfill VOCA funding (\$18.5M). Federal legislators are actively working on a sustainable fix for VOCA (H.R. 909), which has bipartisan support and, at last count, 148 co-sponsors. This one-time investment will ensure that when crime victims turn to agencies and systems providers for support, help will be there.

In my work as a Latinx Program Coordinator, I see the difference services make in the lives of survivors of domestic violence. Each week I facilitate a support group where survivors bravely share their stories- stories of harm, but also resilience, healing and the fight to reclaim their safety and dignity.

These bills matter. They reflect the realities survivors face and the structural change they urgently need. From language access to housing stability to legal protection, every piece of legislation that centers survivors bring us closer to a world where healing is possible and safety is a right, not a privilege.

Many of the survivors I work with- especially those in Latinx communities- face compound barriers due to language, immigration status and systemic inequalities. Without strong policies that understand and address these layers, survivors are too often left unsupported or retraumatized.

As someone who has walks alongside survivors through their journeys, I urge you to pass these bills. Survivors are not asking for sympathy; they're asking for safety, justice and the ability to rebuild their lives. Thes bills are a step toward that future. Thank you for your leadership and considering this legislation with urgency and compassion it deserves.

I urge you to vote in favor of POP# 327 and HB 3196. These funds are crucial for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Thank you for your support and the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Alejandra Tapia

Resident of Washington County