



April 9, 2025

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3196 – \$18.5M to Backfill Federal Cuts to Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding – Submitted by the Washington County Public Safety Coordinating Council (WCPSCC)

Dear Co-Chairs Broadman and Evans, and members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety:

On behalf of the Washington County Public Safety Coordinating Council (WCPSCC), thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for House Bill 3196, which will ensure that essential crime victim services continue uninterrupted across Oregon.

The WCPSCC is a statutorily mandated cross-sector coalition that brings together law enforcement, judicial leaders, behavioral health providers, victim advocates, county officials, and community-based organizations. Together, we coordinate, and support strategies aimed at reducing recidivism and improving outcomes for individuals involved in the justice system. We recognize that services and support for crime victims are vital components of public safety.

We urgently request your support of HB 3196, which will backfill \$18.5M in planned federal cuts to Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding for Oregon victim services.

VOCA is the primary source of federal grants for services to survivors of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, attempted homicide, and other crimes. Oregon was alerted that this federal funding is being reduced by 42%. Although Congress may take action to pass fixes to the VOCA funding, these measures will come too late to prevent the funding cuts going into effect in Oregon this summer.

If immediate action is not taken to address this shortfall, it will dramatically reduce the capacity of victim services organizations, such as children’s advocacy centers, domestic violence and sexual assault programs, district attorney victim assistance programs, and more. Washington County-serving programs impacted by these cuts include but are not limited to:

- CARES Northwest
- City of Beaverton
- City of Hillsboro
- Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC)
- Muslimahs United
- Safety Compass – Washington
- Sexual Assault Resource Center
- Village for One
- Washington County Sheriff’s Office
- Washington County District Attorney Victim Assistance Program

Without these funds, crime victims will lose access to services that keep them safe, help them heal, and bring them justice. The loss of VOCA funding will place increased burdens on already stretched resources, resulting in reduced staffing, increased wait time, fewer children and adults receiving care, and delays in investigations and bringing offenders to justice. Additionally, loss of VOCA funding could significantly impact the ability to ensure victims are able to exercise their statutory and constitutional rights throughout the criminal process.

We respectfully urge you to support HB 3196 and preserve the critical safety net for victims of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melissa Laird". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Melissa" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Laird".

Melissa Laird
Washington County Public Safety Coordinating Council, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deanna Palm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Deanna" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Palm".

Deanna Palm
Washington County Public Safety Coordinating Council, Vice-Chair