



**MENDING THE
SACRED HOOP**



**MINNESOTA
CHILDREN'S
ALLIANCE**



**VIOLENCE FREE
MINNESOTA**
THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE



April 17, 2024

Members of the Minnesota Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Letter in Support of Additional Funding for Crime Victims Services

Dear Chair Latz and Committee Members,

The Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition (MIWSAC), the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA), Violence Free Minnesota (VFMN), the Minnesota Alliance on Crime (MAC), the Minnesota Children's Alliance (MCA), and Mending the Sacred Hoop (MSH), in community submit this letter on behalf of our member programs and the communities they serve. Our coalitions represent over 200 programs serving more than 68,000 victims/survivors of violence annually across the state. We advocate on behalf of our member organizations and individuals to lift the voices of victims/survivors at the legislature and beyond. The Coalitions are joined in this letter by member programs and their community and systems partners from across Minnesota who recognize the critical role victim services play in ensuring public safety.

We are writing jointly to thank you for including over \$9 million in fiscal year 2025 for crime victim services funding. Crime victims services funding is used in communities across the state to:

- provide emergency shelter and crisis response,
- provide victims/survivors of violence and their families with support and resources for healing and justice,
- provide community education and violence prevention,
- promote public safety.

Our programs are a critical piece of public safety infrastructure, prioritizing victims/survivors' physical and emotional safety needs and providing legal support, medical care, mental health services, and addressing immediate needs such as food and shelter.

Due to years of stagnant funding from the state, exacerbated by a historic depletion of VOCA funds and cuts at the federal level, crime victims services programs struggle to maintain adequate staffing and provide the most fundamental services for victims/survivors in many communities. Working with victims of crime is difficult,



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highly skilled work done by dedicated advocates. Rates of compassion fatigue and burnout are high, and these stresses are compounded by wages that have not kept up with cost of living increases. Without this desperately needed funding, programs across the state will close, leaving victims/survivors of violence without the resources for support and healing that can only be provided by these experts. One advocacy program, 360 Communities, was not able to secure enough funding to keep its 21 bed Hastings shelter operational. These 21 beds usually served about 200 people every year—and now they are gone.

Crime victim services programs are integral parts of local communities, and the work they do cannot and should not be done by other arms of the public safety system. Without these programs, there will be fewer opportunities for individuals and communities to heal following experiences of violence. The community partners who have signed on to this letter have recognized the value of these programs in their local communities, and urge you to allow them to continue to provide these critical services.

In Community,

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CURA-POT, Ramsey
Division of Indian Work, Hennepin
Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, St. Louis
Domestic Abuse Project, Hennepin
East Side Neighborhood Services, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey
*Equay Wiigamig, Red Lake Reservation, Beltrami
*Family Pathways, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Carlton
Family Safety Network, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard
Freeborn County Crime Victim Crisis Center, Freeborn
Friends Against Abuse, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods
Gender Violence Institute, Statewide
Global Rights for Women, International
Hands of Hope Resource Center, Morrison, Todd
Hmong American Partnership, Ramsey
Healing Opportunity Provided Equally (HOPE), Aitkin, Crow Wing
Hope Center, Rice
*Hope Coalition, Goodhue, Wabasha
Indigenous Women's Life Net, Ramsey, Hennepin
Kissy's Stay Put Services, Hennepin
Karen Organization of Minnesota, Statewide
*Lakes Crisis and Resource Center, Becker & surrounding area
Martin County Victim Services, Martin
McLeod Alliance for Victims of Domestic Violence, McLeod
Men As Peacemakers - Men and Masculine Folk Network, Statewide
*Mid-Minnesota Women's Center, Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, Wadena

All Minnesota Alliance on Crime Members:

360 Communities
Agape Child Development Center (New Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention)
Anoka County Attorney's Office
Breaking Free
Brown County Attorney's Office

Carver County Attorney's Office
Cass County Attorney's Office
Chisago County Attorney's Office
City of Blaine Police Department
City of Bloomington Attorney's Office
City of Duluth Attorney's Office
City of Minneapolis Attorney's Office
City of Rochester Attorney's Office
City of Shakopee Police Department
City of St. Paul Attorney's Office
Clay County Attorney's Office
Community University Health Care (CUHC)
Cook County Attorney's Office
Cornerstone Advocacy Service
Crime Victim Resource Center (Mayo)
Crow Wing County Crime Victim Services
Dakota County Attorney's Office
DOC VS & Restorative Justice Unit
D&O Community Corrections
Family Pathways
Family Safety Network
Faribault County Attorney's Office
Friends Against Abuse
Hands of Hope
Hennepin County Attorney's Office
Meghan Hennessey
HOPE Coalition
Isanti County Attorney's Office/SAIC
Itasca County Attorney's Office
Aaliyah Jensen
Stacie Jergenson
Kanabec County Attorney's Office
Kandiyohi County Attorney's Office
Lake County Attorney's Office
Micheala Leecy
LeSueur County Attorney's Office
Martin County Attorney's Office
Meeker County Attorney's Office
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Minnesota Center for Psychology
Minnesota Children's Alliance
Minnesota Elder Justice Center
MN Indigenous Women's Society
Missing Children Minnesota
Missions, Inc. Programs
Moorhead City Attorney's Office
New Horizons Crisis Center
The God's Child Project

Nicollet County Attorney's Office
Nobles County Attorney's Office
Norman County Attorney's Office
Northeast Family and Youth Services
Pennington County Attorney's Office
Pillsbury United Communities
Polk County Attorney's Office
Ramsey County Attorney's Office
Red Lake County Attorney's Office
Redwood County Attorney's Office
Relationship Safety Alliance
Renville County Attorney's Office
Rice County Attorney's Office
Rivers of Hope
Brenda Rodriguez-Kinley
Roseau County Attorney's Office
Safe Avenues
Lauren Schmitz
Lisa Smith
Someplace Safe
Southern MN Regional Legal Services, Inc.
Southern Valley Alliance
St. Louis County Attorney's Office
Standpoint
Stearns County Attorney's Office
Stearns County Sheriff's Department
Stevens County Attorney's Office
Survivor Resources
ThinkSelf
Watonwon County Attorney's Office
Patti Weber
Dr. Mary Whitney
Women of Nations
Women's Advocates
WRAP
Wright County Attorney's Office

All Minnesota Children's Alliance Member Programs:

Red River Children's Advocacy Center
Family Advocacy Center of Northern Minnesota
Central Minnesota Child Advocacy Center
Child and Family Advocacy Center of South Central Minnesota
CornerHouse
First Witness
Matty's Place

Mayo Center for Safe and Healthy Children and Adolescents
Midwest Children's Resource Center
North Star Family Advocacy Center Southwest Crisis Center
White Earth Band of Ojibwe Children's Advocacy Center
Child's Place
Southwest Crisis Center

All Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition Members:

Dove Program - DV/SA
Equay Wiigamig
Fed. Bureau of Investigation
Fond du Lac Reservation Advocacy
Golden Eagle Production
Grand Portage Human Services
Hope Coalition DV/SA
Kateri Residence
Leech Lake Tribal Police
Member of Grand Traverse Band
Men As Peacemakers
Merrick Community Services
Mn. Dept. of Corrections, Victim Asst
Mn. Indian Womens Resouce Center
MN 350
Native American Community Clinic
NW Indian Community Development
Red Lake Nation Legislative Affairs
Northwoods Battered Woman's Shelter
Sahnish Scouts
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
Support Within Reach
Break The Silence
Merrick Community Services
Tate Topa Consulting
Division of Indian Works Family Violence
Woman of Nations
Ain Dah Yung Center
Prairie Island - PIIC
Omaha Nation Community
Mid-Minnesota Woman's Center
Angelica Allery
Mary Sue Anderson
Sasha Anderson
Susan Anderson
Candice Ballinger

Faye Beaulieu
Lauretta Blakely
Christina Bowstring
Chandell Boyd
Virginia Branchaud
Juliane Chase-Wilson
Nigel Cook
Stephanie Cobenais
Fran Crow Ghost
Linda Eagle Speaker
Serene Eidem
Sarah Edstrom
Abuse Response Services
Jessica Ahlers
Erica McKeown
Brianna Littlewolf
Tara Lewis
Rachel LaRose
Leech Lake Tribal Police
Meskawaki Victim Services
American Indian Family Center
Caitlin Orgon
Family Violence Prevention Program DV/SA
Minneapolis American Indian Center -
Indigenous Woman's Life Net
NW Indian Community Development
Holly Larsen
Gabrielle Raymond
Sandra Mount
Colleen Dodge
Chantel Alveshive
Tia Krueger
Barbra Hveve
Racheal Larsen
Debra Thomas
Melanie Menkench
Lillian Jones
Diane Gibbs
Debra Accetta
Jessica Ahlers
Abi Glaum
Leslie Clavel
Maura Whiteley
nauJenna Reed
Laurissa Wredberg
Tabitha Delaney
Amanda Tkaczik
Caroline Blacketter

Cecil Longie
Cere Swiftwater
Charlise Sargent
Eileen Hudon
Ursula Watson
Sandy Whitehawk
Charlie Thompson
Sandy Davidson
Dawn LaRoque
Heidi Novak
Lisa Iyotte
Vicky Fineday
Crystal Hedemann
Judy Tholen