

# REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

---

DATE: January 19, 2024

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso   
Chief Legislative Analyst

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Council File No. | 23-1275    |
| Assignment No.   | 23-12-0630 |

SUBJECT: Resolution to OPPOSE federal funding cuts to the Victims of Crime Act in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 budget and SUPPORT legislative and/or administrative action to allocate \$200 million in ongoing funding in the State's FY 2024-25 budget for victim and survivor services.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution to include in the City's 2024-2025 Federal Legislative Program, OPPOSITION of the proposed \$700 million cut to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 budget and include in the 2024-2025 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for legislative and/or administrative action that would allocate \$200 million in ongoing funding in the State's FY 2024-25 budget to maintain victim and survivor services in California.

## SUMMARY

On December 8, 2023, Council adopted Motion (Yaroslavsky – Rodriguez, et al.) directing the Chief Legislative Analyst to draft Resolutions to oppose the proposed \$700 million federal funding cut to VOCA in the FY 2024-25 budget and support the allocation of \$200 million in ongoing funding for victim and survivor services in the State's FY 2024-25 budget.

Pursuant to Council action, our Office has prepared two Resolutions which are attached to this report.

## BACKGROUND

The Victim of Crimes Act (VOCA), passed by Congress in 1984, established the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) to provide grants to state and local programs that assist victims of crime. The CVF is funded by fines, penalties, and assessments from convictions in federal cases and provides the largest and most flexible source of funding for crime victim services in the nation.

Recent deposits to the CVF dropped to historically low levels, which have threatened funding stability for the CVF. As a result, Congress passed the VOCA Fix Act in 2021 to expand funding to the CVF to include payments from deferred prosecutions agreements and other federal funding sources, and enhance VOCA funding spending flexibility by waiving certain local matching requirements and other uses. Despite the VOCA Fix Act, the added funding has not been sufficient to completely replenish the CVF and members of both the House and Senate have proposed to cut the allowable allocation of VOCA funding to states.

California receives the largest amount of VOCA funding, which provides emergency housing to domestic violence survivors and their families, services at rape crisis centers, and assistance to victims of elder abuse and human trafficking, among other life-saving services. Congress' proposed \$700 million reduction to VOCA funding would result in a loss of \$160 million for victim and survivor services in California in FY

2024-25. The California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, the State’s VOCA funding administrator, estimates that \$262.2 million is needed to sustain current funding levels for victim and survivor services in FY 2024-25.

The City Attorney’s Office receives over \$4.3 million per year for victim services in the City. Of that, 75 percent originates from VOCA funding and is used to operate the City Attorney’s Office Victim Assistance Program (VAP). VAP provides assistance to victims of crimes regardless of whether the crimes are misdemeanor or felony offenses, and irrespective of whether suspects have been identified in the cases. Due to VOCA funding instability, the City Attorney’s Office has been informed that the program will lose \$1.34 million in VOCA funding in 2025, which will result in the loss of six Victim Service Coordinator positions and funding for half of a full-time Program Director position.

The California Legislative Analyst’s Office estimates that the State will face a \$68 billion deficit in FY 2024-25, due to severe revenue decline in 2022-23.

The attached Resolutions would establish positions in the City’s federal and State legislative programs to support funding for these programs and oppose cuts to these funds.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

- City Attorney
- Community Investment for Families Department



Susan Oh  
Analyst

- Attachment: Resolution (Opposition to Federal VOCA Funding Cuts)
- Resolution (Support for State Funding for Victim and Survivor Services)

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations, or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Victim of Crimes Act (VOCA) was passed by Congress in 1984 and established the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) to provide grants to state and local programs that assist victims of crime; and

**WHEREAS**, the CVF is funded by criminal fines and penalties collected by the federal government and provides the largest and most flexible source of funding for crime victim services across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, VOCA funding has been vital in its support of victim service providers in the areas of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child abuse, and elder abuse; and

**WHEREAS**, deposits into the CVF have dipped to historically low levels and the House and Senate are both proposing to cut VOCA funding by \$700 million for FY 2024-25, representing a 37 percent reduction from current year funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services anticipates that this funding cut will potentially result in a 40 to 50 percent funding reduction to all victims' programs in the State; and

**WHEREAS**, cuts to the CVF will have devastating impacts on the provision of housing, legal, and other support services to survivors of sexual and domestic violence, victims of crime, and their families;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2024-2025 Federal Legislative Program, OPPOSITION to any legislation or administrative action which would decrease Victim of Crimes Act funding in FY 2024-25.

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations, or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Victim of Crimes Act (VOCA) was passed by Congress in 1984 to establish the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) and provide grants to state and local programs that assist victims of crime; and

**WHEREAS**, VOCA funding has been vital in its support of victim service providers in the areas of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child abuse, and elder abuse; and

**WHEREAS**, deposits into the CVF have dipped to historically low levels and as a result, states and territories may experience enormous cuts to their grant funding and programs; and

**WHEREAS**, to address the shortfall in the CVF, Congress passed the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fix Act in 2021, but it has not been sufficient to completely replenish the CVF to maintain current funding levels for necessary services; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of California is the largest recipient of VOCA funding, which is administered by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES); and

**WHEREAS**, Cal OES stated that \$262.2 million is needed to sustain current funding levels for victim and survivor services in the State; and

**WHEREAS**, cuts to the CVF will have devastating impacts on the provision of housing, legal, and other support services to survivors of sexual and domestic violence, victims of crime and their families;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2024-2025 State Legislative Program, SUPPORT for any legislation or administrative action which would designate \$200 million in ongoing funding for victim and survivor services in the State's FY 2024-25 budget.