

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairwoman Murray, and Vice Chair Collins,

We write to you with great concern regarding the impending reduction in obligations from the Crime Victims Fund (CVF). We urge you to include language in the final fiscal year (FY) 2024 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill that would avert catastrophic cuts to victim assistance programs throughout the United States.

As you know, Congress created the CVF through the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (P.L. 98-473). This vital fund supports victim assistance programs through grants to states, local government, and other non-profit entities. Importantly, this funding comes at no expense to the taxpayer, as the CVF is financed entirely from the criminal fines, penalties, special assessments, deferred prosecution agreements, and non-prosecution agreements of federal criminal cases. The programs supported by the CVF serve an average of 3.7 million victims each year.<sup>1</sup>

Tragically, the CVF is facing a substantial shortfall for FY2024. In the FY2024 President's Budget Appendix for the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimated that the end-of-year carryover balance of the CVF would be \$740 million.<sup>2</sup> This amounts to the lowest carryover balance since FY2004.<sup>3</sup> Due to this lack of funds, both the House and Senate CJS appropriations bills lowered the statutory

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<sup>1</sup> National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators. October 18, 2021. "Funding." <https://navaa.org/funding/>.

<sup>2</sup> Office of Management and Budget. Fiscal Year 2024. "Appendix: Budget of the U.S. Government." Page 733. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/appendix\\_fy2024.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/appendix_fy2024.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Congressional Research Service. April 2, 2020. "The Crime Victims Fund: Federal Support for Victims of Crime." Page 5. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R42672>.

cap on CVF obligations from \$1.9 billion in FY2023 to \$1.2 billion for FY2024.<sup>4</sup> This 37% decrease will devastate victim support programs across our country.


As part of the House of Representatives' consideration of the FY2024 CJS appropriations bill, a bipartisan group of Members submitted an amendment addressing this issue.<sup>5</sup> This amendment would redirect funds collected through the False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. §§ 3729-3733) to the CVF for FY2024 only. The False Claims Act imposes civil penalties on entities that defraud the United States government, and according to DOJ, False Claims Act settlements and judgements exceeded \$2.2 billion in FY2022 alone.<sup>6</sup> A one-time infusion of funds to the CVF of this magnitude would ensure that the programs victims depend upon can continue to provide necessary care, support, and assistance.

The CVF has consistently received bipartisan and bicameral support, and Congress must act to safeguard the resources on which over 3 million victims rely. Therefore, we urge you to include the False Claims Act amendment language in the final FY2024 CJS appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

  
Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress

  
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress

  
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

  
Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colón  
Member of Congress


  
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

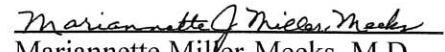
  
Zach Nunn  
Member of Congress


<sup>4</sup> H.R. 5893. 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024*. Page 100. Sec. 510.; S. 2321. 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024*. Page 115. Sec. 510.

<sup>5</sup> House Rules Committee. H.R. 5893. Wagner (MO) Amendment 65. <https://rules.house.gov/bill/118/hr-5893>.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Justice. February 7, 2023. "False Claims Act Settlements and Judgments Exceed \$2 billion in Fiscal Year 2022." <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/false-claims-act-settlements-and-judgments-exceed-2-billion-fiscal-year-2022>.

  
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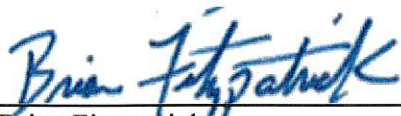
  
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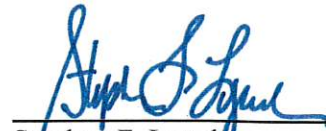
  
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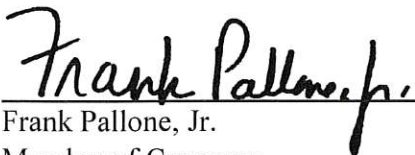
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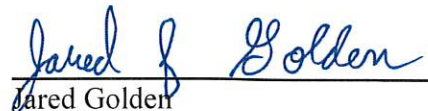
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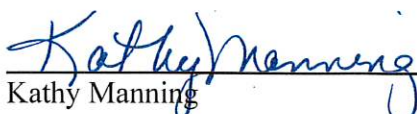


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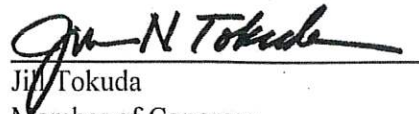
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