

Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act

Sponsor: Rep. Ann Wagner (R-MO)

*Co-Leads: Reps. Nathaniel Moran (R-TX), Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Stephanie Bice (R-OK),
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The Crime Victims Fund

Congress created the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) through the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to provide funding for state victim assistance programs. Importantly, the CVF is not funded by taxpayer dollars. Instead, the CVF is primarily financed through the fines, settlements, bonds, and other monetary penalties associated with federal criminal prosecutions.

These vital resources support thousands of victim assistance programs throughout the United States, including Child Advocacy Centers, domestic violence agencies, and rape crisis centers, serving an average of 3.7 million victims of crime each year.

The Problem

While deposits into the CVF fluctuate annually depending on the cases prosecuted by the Department of Justice, the CVF has seen a drastic decline in recent years. According to the Office for Victims of Crime, the CVF's end-of-year balance for FY2024 was \$1.2 billion—a 90% decrease since FY2017.

As a result of this shortfall, the victim assistance programs supported by the CVF nationwide now face a devastating \$600 million cut in funding compared to last year. This will force these vital programs to either triage their services, or worse, close their doors entirely.

The Solution

The *Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act* directly addresses this problem by redirecting funds collected through the False Claims Act (FCA) into the CVF through FY2029.

The FCA authorizes the federal government to hold entities liable that knowingly defraud government agencies for up to three times the damages. Over the past two fiscal years, settlements and judgements under the FCA have totaled nearly \$5 billion.

The FCA requires that a portion of the damages collected are first repaid to the defrauded government agency and relevant whistleblowers, however the leftover funds remain unobligated. The *Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act* would only redirect these leftover, unobligated funds to the CVF.

This temporary infusion of resources will help stabilize the CVF, while retaining the Fund's original intent of being financed by legal fines and fees, not Americans' tax dollars. More importantly, this legislation will give victim assistance programs the support necessary to keep their operations running.

Supporting Organizations

National Children's Alliance, National Criminal Justice Association, National District Attorneys Association, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Network to End Domestic Violence, Jewish Women International, Covenant House International, the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Just Solutions, YWCA USA, Alliance for Safety and Justice, Crime Survivors of Safety and Justice, Californians for Safety and Justice, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, National Organization for Victim Advocacy, National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, Legal Momentum, Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking, National Domestic Violence Hotline, VALOR, and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.