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OFFICE OF THE
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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Demands Congress Stop Diverting Funds from Crime Victims and Pass the Fairness for Crime Victims Act



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is demanding that the U.S. Congress stop diverting money out of Victims of Crime Act funds. VOCA-funded, state-victim assistance grants support direct services, such as emergency shelter, crisis intervention and counseling to victims. In fiscal year 2022, these grants provided support to more than 9.8 million victims, however, there has been a sharp decrease in collections and states will have less funds available to distribute. In a letter sent to congressional leaders, Attorney General Moody is urging Congress to pass the Fairness for Crime Victims Act to make sure states adequately provide support and resources to victims of crime.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “VOCA grants are a vital tool that states can use to provide services and support to victims of crime, but because Congress is diverting funds elsewhere, funds allocated for victims have sharply decreased. Congress must pass the Fairness for Crime Victims Act to make sure that those injured by crime can receive much-needed assistance.”

In 2000, Congress placed an annual cap on how much could be spent out of the VOCA funds to support and protect victims. At the time, Congress set the cap to ensure a stable, long-term

funding stream to protect against annual fluctuations and deposits. However, Congress used this cap to take the excess money and spend it on unrelated programs at the expense of victims. If Congress did not take the excess money, billions of dollars would currently be in the VOCA fund and, presumably, the cap would not need to be decreased to deal with a temporary downturn in collections.

According to the letter, “Florida has approximately \$37,000,000 less to distribute this fiscal year and approximately \$77,000,000 less to distribute in fiscal year 2024 compared to fiscal year 2022. These decreases have caused and will cause Florida to make tough choices in the granting of funds.”

S.2661, the Fairness for Crime Victims Act of 2023, “establishes budget points of order in the House and the Senate against considering provisions in appropriations legislation that contain changes in mandatory programs (CHIMPs) that would cause the amount available for obligation during the fiscal year from the Crime Victims Fund to be less than the annual average for the three previous fiscal years.”

The letter goes on to say, “These choices and the impacts that they will have on crime victims were avoidable and are a result of Congress’s unwillingness to live within its means. Congress should pass S.2661 to prevent further raiding of the VOCA fund in the future. I also would request that Congress consider additional actions to undo the harm it has caused to crime victims with its past reckless behavior.”

Read the full letter [here](#).

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