

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

June 23, 2021

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chairperson
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shaheen and Ranking Member Moran:

We write to you today to urge support for funding the programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the fiscal year 2022 appropriations process with appropriated funds, in order to ensure that crimes collection money allocated for the Crime Victims Fund will be devoted exclusively to assisting victims of crime.

Originally enacted in 1994, VAWA has helped hundreds of thousands of women by providing access to critical services such as domestic violence shelters, legal aid, and counseling services. In addition to providing services to crime victims, VAWA has raised public awareness about sexual and domestic violence and helped to improve the criminal justice system's response to these crimes. It is critical that these cost-effective programs be funded generously.

Similarly, the Crime Victims Fund was established by Congress in 1984 to support crime survivors by providing medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, courtroom advocacy, temporary housing, and much more. The Fund is unique because all the money in it derives from fines and restitution paid by criminals convicted of federal crimes and not from taxpayers. Unfortunately, the Fund's effectiveness has been weakened in recent years due to federal prosecutors' increased reliance on deferred- or no-prosecution agreements and the establishment of an appropriations cap on the distribution of money from the Fund. Additionally, \$1.5 billion in the Fund was rescinded in 2015 to provide an offset for a budget agreement with the Obama Administration.

Congress must uphold the commitment it made to victims with the establishment of the Crime Victims Fund. To do so, the cap on the Crime Victims Fund should be set as high as possible during this year's appropriations. Moreover, every last penny brought into the Fund should be used to help victims of crime rather than as funding for other projects unrelated to crime victim's services. We also urge the Subcommittee to boost outlays from the Fund sufficient to provide for an appropriate funding stream for Tribes. Individuals on tribal lands experience high rates of domestic and sexual violence and resources from the Fund are critical in addressing tribal victims' needs.

Thank you for your past support of these programs and related resources for victims of crime. We encourage you to continue to do all that you can to make services to victims and survivors a continued priority in this year's appropriations process.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



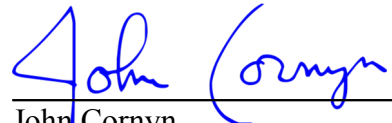
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United States Senator




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United States Senator



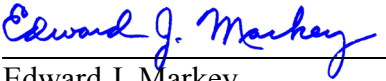
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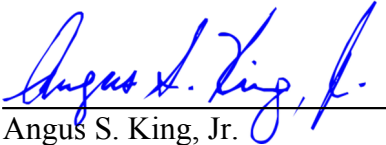
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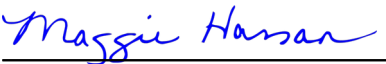
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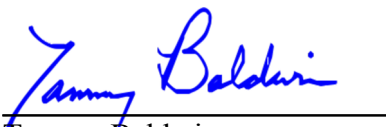
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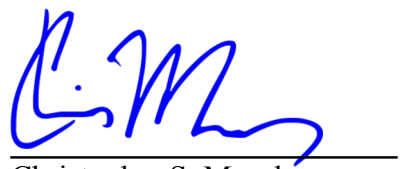
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Tammy Baldwin
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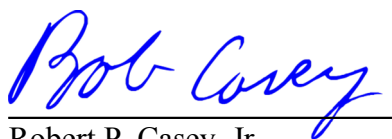
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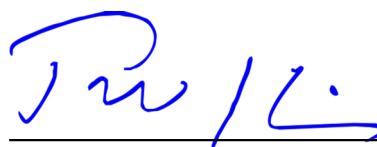
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Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



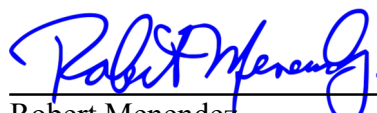
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



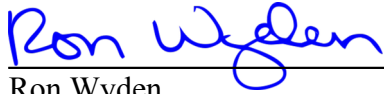
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