

SB148 - BCC Testimony 03.17.23.pdf

Uploaded by: Andrea Carroll

Position: FAV

**SB148****Victim Services Programs - Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)**

House Appropriations Committee

March 17, 2023

POSITION: SUPPORT

My name is Andrea Carroll and I am the Director of Behavioral Health Services at Board of Child Care (BCC). We are headquartered and provide services in Baltimore County, but also within Maryland have programs in Anne Arundel, Caroline, St. Mary's, Montgomery, and Washington Counties. I am submitting this written testimony on SB148 Victim Services Programs - Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act) to encourage your support of this bill.

Our organization provides a comprehensive continuum of care throughout the state to meet the behavioral health needs of Maryland's families. BCC's continuum includes: outpatient mental health clinics, school-based treatment, community- and family-based services, and therapeutic residential services, serving hundreds of youth and families across the state each year. BCC has a long history of providing prevention, education, behavioral health, and residential treatment services to at-risk youth and families that have experienced complex trauma, including serving youth and families that have experienced sex and labor trafficking.

Beginning in October 2018, BCC has been granted annual Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) subawards by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) to provide needed care to child, youth, and young adult survivors of human trafficking. With these funds, BCC has served 23 survivors of sex trafficking from across the state in our residential care program since 2019 and 19 survivors of sex trafficking in the Anne Arundel County Regional Navigator Program since 2021. BCC has used VOCA funds in the following ways:

- Funding staff positions that provide services to victims of trafficking
- Meeting basic needs of victims of trafficking: clothing, food, transportation, shelter, toiletries
- Providing specialized therapy services to victims of trafficking, including supplemental services such as animal-assisted therapy and expressive arts therapies that have been shown to be effective with youth who have experienced trauma
- Providing intensive care coordination and case management to victims of trafficking, working with multidisciplinary community partners such as law enforcement and state's attorneys
- Helping victims of trafficking meet housing, educational, and vocational goals

- Adding safety enhancements in the residential units to keep victims of trafficking safe from themselves and others
- Training staff in human trafficking and related evidence-based treatment models to ensure that services provided to trafficked youth are trauma-informed and effective
- Preventing and fostering early identification of human trafficking in the community through training and public awareness activities

Many of the important services outlined above that BCC offers to child sex trafficking survivors were only possible with the VOCA grant awards provided by the GOCYVVS. Some staff positions, such as the Anne Arundel County Regional Navigator, are fully funded by the grant. **Without these funds, our Regional Navigator Program would be unable to operate and our residential program would not be able to offer the same level of specialized services needed to work with this population.** When federal VOCA money was insufficient or delayed in the past, victim services providers had to put programs and services on hold awaiting notice of award while the state rushed to find ways to supplement the funds. **Passing SB148 would be an essential step to ensure that victim services in Maryland could continue seamlessly by requiring the state budget to supplement federal VOCA money received.**

It is important to note that the bill would not require supplemental funds to be included in the state budget every year, but rather only in years when the federal VOCA funds granted to the state do not meet the minimum requirements for victim services in the state to remain operational. On July 22, 2021, President Biden signed into law the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 (VOCA Fix). This law will address gaps in VOCA funding at the federal level, most notably by requiring that monetary penalties from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements to go into the Crime Victims Fund. It is anticipated that it could take a couple years for the Crime Victims Fund to optimize, but after that time it is believed that federal VOCA funds would return to past levels. **The federal VOCA Fix law should significantly reduce any fiscal impact of SB148 in future years.**

We urge you to consider passing SB148 Victim Services Programs - Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act) so that organizations like ours can continue to provide needed services to Maryland's children and youth victimized by heinous crimes such as sex and labor trafficking.

Sincerely,



Andrea Carroll, LCPC
Director of Behavioral Health Services
Board of Child Care
acarroll@boardofchildcare.org

MCPA-MSA_SB 148 _Victim Services Stabilization Act

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FAV



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair and
Members of the Appropriations Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: March 21, 2023

RE: **SB 148 – Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT** SB 148. This bill provides stable state funding to supplement federal funding for victim services in the face of federal budget uncertainties.

The federal Victims of Crimes Act funding supports public or nonprofit organizations that provide services and programs for victims of crimes. This funding is crucial for organizations that assist victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, human trafficking, homicide, and other crimes.

However, federal funding is subject to fluctuations that may impede the continuity of local victim services. SB 148 would ensure that state funds are available for local organizations to fill the gaps when federal funding waivers. The bill requires state funding to prioritize the continuity and stability of victim services and equitable distribution of funding across the state. Importantly, it would make sure that organizations in Maryland are able to continue to provide high-quality, trauma-informed services without the worry of budget cuts.

The MCPA and MSA believe in comprehensively addressing crime and public safety in our communities. Caring for victims of crime is a key piece of that work. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT** SB 148 and urge a **FAVORABLE** report.

HPP VOCA Funding Testimony- FAV (SB 148).pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Emerson

Position: FAV

Testimony of the Human Trafficking Prevention Project

BILL NO: Senate Bill 148
TITLE: Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)
COMMITTEE: Appropriations
HEARING DATE: March 21, 2023
POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

Senate Bill 148 would address the challenges victim services providers experience regarding federal funds for crime victims administered by the State. The Human Trafficking Prevention Project at the University of Baltimore School of Law supports this bill because we depend on VOCA funds to provide legal services to survivors of human trafficking, and this legislation will ensure that state funds are made available to compensate for any future VOCA shortages and provide structural improvements to the administration of the grants.

Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding supports services for crime victims all across the state of Maryland. Funds are used for services such as counseling, advocacy, domestic violence shelters, child advocacy centers, support for rape victims at the hospital, and victim-witness support in court. The Human Trafficking Prevention Project (HTPP)¹ depends on VOCA funds to provide legal representation to survivors of human trafficking in matters that stem directly from their victimization and the instability that so commonly precedes and/or follows it. By providing access to a wide range of civil legal services, including criminal record relief, family law, housing, and consumer matters, the HTPP aids clients in improving survivors' self-sufficiency and stability, which, in turn, assists in trauma recovery and reduces the likelihood of additional or initial exploitation. Yet on-going challenges with funding and the inconsistent administration of the grants has put organizations like the HTPP that rely on VOCA funding in precarious positions.

At its inception, the HTPP was the only organization in the state of Maryland providing criminal record relief to survivors of human trafficking, and it remains the only grant-funded program in the state of Maryland with this focus. Through a generous grant from the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) in 2016, the HTPP expanded to include a partnership with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), which increased the project's reach considerably through the addition of a Project Manager employed by MVLS whose responsibility it is to assess the need for criminal record relief and other civil legal services by conducting in-person legal clinics at organizations in the community that serve HTPP clients. Additionally, the Project Manager is responsible for the training and coordination of a panel of pro bono attorneys who are trained in working with survivors of human trafficking and to whom the cases identified by the Project Manager can be referred.

While criminal record relief is not typically identified as a primary need for human trafficking survivors as soon as they exit a trafficking situation, it is a crucial part of their ability to safely and self-sufficiently move on with their lives afterwards. This is due to the fact that, in addition to the abuse, coercive control and manipulation victims of trafficking routinely face, many victims struggle with the collateral consequences of having a criminal record, much of which commonly stems from crimes they were forced to commit by their trafficker. Data obtained from a national survey of both sex and labor trafficking

¹ First established in 2015, the Human Trafficking Prevention Project is a partnership between the University of Baltimore School of Law and Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.

survivors found that 91% of them reported having a criminal record, with over 50% reporting that *every single arrest* on their criminal record stemmed from their trafficking experience.² Of those surveyed, 73% reported barriers to employment because of their criminal records, while 58% reported barriers to accessing housing.³ These national data are reflected in the lived experiences of HTPP clients, who routinely struggle with obtaining gainful employment and safe housing, sometimes for decades after they've escaped a trafficker. Clients like Tanya, who was first trafficked as a teenager in the early 1990's by her mother as a way to earn income for her mother's addiction. When she finally escaped in the year 2012, she had been exploited by 4 separate traffickers and had been arrested over a dozen times, all for crimes directly related to her trafficking. Since then, Tanya has worked with her HTPP attorney to clear almost all of her criminal record and has gone on to work with a local social services agency in her Maryland community to help other young women who have experienced similar challenges.

Or Leena, who coped with a history of childhood sexual abuse and neglect through substance use, leading her to survival sex work and her first of 3 traffickers when she was just 20 years old. By the time she was trafficked into Maryland from Ohio in 2011, she had been forced by her traffickers to trade sex for money in nearly 20 states, wracking up criminal records in many of them. Since she connected with the HTPP, we have assisted her in clearing her entire record in the state of Maryland and referred her to service providers in each of the other states where she has a criminal record. As a result, LK has been successful in staying clean from drugs and alcohol, obtaining her nursing certification, and is working to regain custody of her daughter.

VOCA funding has been crucial to the successes of both of the survivors described above, as it has been to the hundreds of other trafficking survivors that the HTPP has served over the years. The loss of VOCA funds would devastate the program, requiring the layoff of the Program Manager at MVLS who conducts the entirety of the HTPP's community outreach, as well as the Director of the HTPP who is also the supervising attorney at UB Law. In short, the program itself would close its doors within months, and survivors of human trafficking would lose the only resource dedicated entirely to this crucial form of legal assistance. The recent instability of VOCA funding has been challenging enough, resulting in the pairing down of funding to only personnel costs, and requiring both organizations to scramble to acquire funding for our community outreach, training, and program costs. The thought of losing VOCA funding entirely is too difficult to bear.

The HTPP relies on VOCA funding to conduct its crucial holistic legal work, and would like to continue to grow as an organization with GOCPYVS as its partner. However, we cannot do that without providing for the stable funding and support of trauma-informed, high-quality program and services for victims of crime, which SB 148 would provide. For these reasons, the Human Trafficking Prevention Project supports Senate Bill 148, and respectfully urges a favorable report.

***For more information, please contact:
Jessica Emerson, LMSW, Esq.
Director, Human Trafficking Prevention Project
jemerson@ubalt.edu***

² National Survivor Network Members Survey, *Impact of Criminal Arrest and Detention on Survivors of Human Trafficking* (2016), <https://nationalsurvivornetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/VacateSurveyFinal.pdf>.

³ *Id.*

Victim Services Stabilization Act - testimony - se

Uploaded by: Lisae C Jordan

Position: FAV



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

P.O. Box 8782
Silver Spring, MD 20907
Phone: 301-565-2277
Fax: 301-565-3619

For more information contact:
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire
443-995-5544
www.mcasa.org

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 148
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
March 21, 2023

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Appropriations Committee and the Judiciary Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 148 with conforming amendments.

Senate Bill 148 – Victim Services Stabilization Act

This bill would stabilize victim services funding by backfilling shortages in federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) funding with state dollars. This would make available funding for core victim services consistent year to year and help ensure access to services for survivors of sexual assault, but also for victims and survivors of many types of crime. These services provide support in the criminal justice system but also outside the courts, supporting services like counseling, shelter, and civil legal services. Federal contributions to VOCA are expected to rise. As they go up, state contributions will go down.

VOCA and Helping Survivors Sexual Violence

While VOCA helps support survivors of many different types of crime, responses to sexual violence include:

- Rape Crisis & Recovery counseling for sexually abused children and adults
- Hospital accompaniment during sexual assault forensic exams (rape kits)
- Advocacy for students who are sexually assaulted at college or in K- 12 schools
- Helping survivors seek protective orders

- Child advocacy centers providing child-centered responses to victims of child abuse
- Victim-witness coordinators who help crime victims in the criminal justice system
- Long term legal services, such as divorce and child custody
- Emergency shelters and programs
- Safe Harbor programs for services for child victims of sex trafficking

VOCA in particular, has long been a source of stable funding for existing service providers and is not a “special project” fund. As a result, funding instability rips at the fabric of Maryland’s victim services safety net.

Sexual assault survivors and services have been affected by the pandemic, inflation, and workforce changes. Sexual assault survivors face increasing mental health needs, substance abuse issues, amplified trauma, and isolation. Economic instability, homelessness, and job loss continue to be concerns, with the uneven economic recovery and inflation. Practical concerns like internet access, lack of privacy, and COVID exposure complicate access to services. Programs across the state report increased demand and more challenging cases.

For each person who reaches out, the survivor is often asking for help with more issues. Where a client might have needed help with a protective order before, now they also need help with eviction, unemployment benefits or other issues. Where a survivor might have needed support from a counselor and a short series of counseling session, now they are finding themselves triggered by the anxiety of the pandemic layered on top of their experience of trauma and in need of long-term therapy. Survivors who previously felt stable and secure in their recovery and returning and new survivors are being victimized and new needs are created.

Perpetrators were emboldened by the COVID pandemic and continuing effects. They are using the pandemic and economic pressures to gain or renew access to victims, intimidate survivors into silence, and interfere with survivors' attempts to seek safety and justice. All across the state, we are hearing reports that violence is becoming more severe.

Federal VOCA Funding – Allocations

Federal funding under the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) supports a wide range of services for survivors of sexual assault and abuse. There have been significant challenges at the federal level as the pool of federal dollars available for VOCA swung up and down over several years. Maryland received \$61.1 million in federal fiscal year 2018, this steadily fell with a low point of \$18.9 in FFY2021 and rose to \$26.4 in FFY2022. Fortunately, advocacy at the federal level has helped address this and in July of 2021, Congress passed the [VOCA Fix bill](#) with bi-partisan support and [President Biden signed](#)

[it](#) into law. This will replenish the pool of federal VOCA funding that has long supported victim services. The replenishment will, however, take several years.

State VOCA Administration

Challenges at the federal level were complicated by difficulties at the state level. VOCA is administered by the agency now called the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (formerly GOCCP). Funds may be expended over 3 years. Unfortunately, there was inadequate accounting and lack of transparency from GOCPYVS and information regarding reserves was lacking.

The General Assembly stepped in with important budget language to ensure that funding continued. MCASA is so very grateful for this support. Despite this, VOCA grants to programs were cut nearly 20% on September 24, 2021, days before the grants were set to begin on October 1st. After repeated requests from legislators and from the field Governor Hogan restored these cuts, but this was after the start of the grant period and after harm had been done to services.

When continuing gaps in funding became apparent last session, an additional \$35 million for victim services was allocated as part of a supplemental budget. The General Assembly helped advocate for the additional funding and fenced off \$20 million to help with this effort. **Without this action, rape crisis centers, child advocacy centers, programs helping sex trafficking survivors, domestic violence shelters, and others supporting crime victims across the state would have faced lay-offs, reduced services, or even closure.**

Challenges for Rape Crisis Centers and Other Victim Service Providers

The continuing ups and downs, last minute and significant changes in allocations, and threats to eliminate funding harm the people and organizations who are helping survivors and ultimately harm survivors. Providers report being unable to fill positions because funding is uncertain and, as a result, there is an impact on services. Planning for new services is hampered by the repeated failure to provide information about available funding, last minute requests for grant applications, and shifting deadlines.

Helping survivors of sexual violence takes a toll on the wonderful and dedicated professionals in the field. The funding challenges from the VOCA instability compound challenges to the very people the State should be supporting. **SB148 helps support survivors and the people helping survivors.**

Workforce Challenges

VOCA instability compounds enormous workforce challenges. Rape crisis and sexual assault programs report 20%-33% of staff positions in transition as people retire, resign, or change jobs. This is having a direct impact on funding needs. Programs have increased salaries in order to retain staff. Non-profit providers are now competing with

fast food restaurants and retail establishments offering higher wages, benefits, and bonuses. Demand for professional staff, particularly counseling staff, is even more intense, with private firms actively seeking out and recruiting rape crisis center staff for their expertise responding to trauma. The constant challenges from VOCA make this worse because programs hesitate to fill positions when funding is so uncertain. SB148 will help address this.

SB148 Provisions

Senate Bill 148 will not guarantee that any particular program will receive funding, but the stability it provides will help ensure that the State of Maryland consistently provides strong support for victim services. The base funding for victim services will return to nearly the 2018 federal funding, with a \$60 million floor. Important bill language requires services throughout the State, so rural and urban survivors have access to services. State funds will be able to be used to meet federal match requirement, which will help eliminate a barrier for many smaller and culturally specific programs, and other rules regarding funding will be consistent across state and federal funding sources to simplify administration. Crucially, the government will be required to consult with experts in the field regarding funding allocations.

Conforming amendments: amendments to the cross-file of this legislation, HB186, are clarifying, address reporting, and provide that funds may not be used for capital projects. These are consistent with the purposes of the bill.

Senate Bill 148 does not solve every problem for every need, but it would create a strong structural improvement for survivors of sexual assault and for the many other victims of crime across the state of Maryland.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
urges the Appropriations Committee and the
Judiciary Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 148 with conforming amendments**



MPA House Testimony 2023 - Support - Senate Bill 1

Uploaded by: Pat Savage

Position: FAV



10480 Little Patuxent Parkway, Ste 910, Columbia, MD 21044. Office 410-992-4258. Fax: [410-992-7732](tel:410-992-7732). www.marylandpsychology.org

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

March 17, 2023

President

Rebecca Resnick, PsyD,

President-elect

Brian Corrado, PsyD

Past President

Linda McGhee, PhD, JD

Secretary

Tanya Morrel, PhD

Treasurer

Melinda Capaldi, PsyD

Representatives-at-large

Jessica Rothstein, PsyD

Andrea Chisolm, Ph.D.

Representative to APA Council

Peter Smith, PsyD

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Communications

Robyn Waxman, PhD

Diversity

Whitney Hobson, PsyD

Early Career Psychologist

Meghan Mattos, PsyD

Educational Affairs

Laurie Friedman Donze, PhD

Ethics

Colleen Byrne, PhD

Legislative

Pat Savage, PhD

Membership

Linda Herbert, PhD

Professional Practice

Karin Cleary, PhD

PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS

OFFICER

Paul C. Berman, PhD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thomas Cote, MBA, CAE

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Vice Chair
Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 148 - Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)

Position: Support

Dear Chair; Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, asks the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to **FAVORABLY report on Senate Bill 148**. **Senate Bill 148** allows for supplemental state funding of victim service programs to provide stable funding of support services for victims of crime.

This bill will provide stabilization of the flow of funding to support victim services to alleged victims of crime. When victims of crimes come to court, they quite often find themselves completely uninformed and unsupported. Often no one is available to tell them what is happening, let alone advocate for them.

As mental/emotional health professionals we can provide alleged victims with tools of psychological recovery, but we cannot advocate and inform them of their right to be heard and to be treated with respect and sensitivity. If passed, this bill would help to secure and significantly improve the chances of victim recovery and prevention of lingering emotional problems such as Post Traumatic Stress by fully supporting them throughout the legal process.

Thank you for considering our comments on **Senate Bill 148**. If we can be of any further assistance as the House – Appropriations Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Pat Savage at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs

SB00148_DHS_FAV (2).pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Sledge

Position: FAV

Date: March 21, 2023

Bill number: SB0148

Committee: House Appropriations Committee

Bill title: **Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)**

DHS Position: **FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide written support for Senate Bill 148 (SB 148).

Senate Bill 148 would ensure that victim services would receive an annual budget supplement from state general funds if federal funding was unavailable to meet a \$60,000,000 annual need. The funding would be used to develop, support and provide continuity to individuals and their families. DHS is the state's primary social services agency serving over a million Maryland residents annually. While not all these individuals or their families need services provided by this funding, many may.

The following examples provide a snapshot of the benefits of SB148 on DHS's clients and their families.

Children Advocacy Centers (CAC) coordinate investigation and intervention services by bringing together professionals and agencies as a multi-disciplinary team to create a child-focused approach to child maltreatment cases. This multi-disciplinary team comprises members from many disciplines including law enforcement, social services, prosecution, mental health, medical and victim advocacy, all of whom work together in the investigation, treatment, management and prosecution of child maltreatment cases. CACs ensure that children are not re-victimized by the very system designed to protect them. A well-functioning CAC provides important support and services through the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) to children who have experienced extreme trauma due to maltreatment. In addition to the forensic interviewing and clinical interventions offered by the multi-disciplinary team, there is a holistic approach that may address additional needs such as food insufficiency, transportation and clothing needs as well as translator services and medical services for individuals without health insurance. In FY 2022 there were over 6,000 (statewide) cases of reported maltreatment. Many of these families received services from the CAC.

The LDSS receives reports of domestic violence when there are children in the home. The LDSS can accept these reports as a Risk of Harm and provide services to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors. Research identifies exposure to domestic violence as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). As an individual's ACE score increases, so does the risk of disease, social and emotional struggles. In FY2022 there were over 1,000 (statewide) cases reported to the LDSS involving domestic violence in the home. Many of these families were referred for additional support by domestic violence providers.

The Department is grateful to offer our support for SB 148 and requests a favorable report.



BJC SUP SB148 cross-d VOCA.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Miicke

Position: FAV

OFFICERS

ELIZABETH GREEN
 President
 ROBIN WEIMAN
 1st Vice President
 AMALIA HONICK
 BENJAMIN ROSENBERG
 RABBI STEVEN SCHWARTZ
 RABBI JONATHAN SEIDEMANN
 MELANIE SHAPIRO
 RABBI ANDREW BUSCH
 Past President
 HOWARD LIBIT
 Executive Director

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 148 - Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)

Appropriations Committee

March 21, 2023

SUPPORT

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation
 American Jewish Committee
 Americans for Peace Now
 Baltimore Chapter
 American Israel Public Affairs Committee
 American Red Magen David for Israel
 American Zionist Movement
 Amit Women
 Association of Reform Zionists of America
 Baltimore Board of Rabbis
 Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
 Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance
 Baltimore Men's ORT
 Baltimore Zionist District
 Beth Am Congregation
 Beth El Congregation
 Beth Israel Congregation
 Beth Shalom Congregation of
 Howard County
 Beth Tfiloh Congregation
 B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region
 B'nai Israel Congregation
 B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation
 Bolton Street Synagogue
 Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.
 Chevrei Tzedek Congregation
 Chizuk Amuno Congregation
 Congregation Beit Tikvah
 Congregation Tiferes Yisroel
 Federation of Jewish Women's
 Organizations of Maryland
 Hadassah
 Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation
 J Street
 Jewish Federation of Howard County
 Jewish Labor Committee
 Jewish War Veterans
 Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary
 Jewish Women International
 Jews For Judaism
 Moses Montefiore Anshe Emanah
 Hebrew Congregation
 National Council of Jewish Women
 Ner Tamid Congregation
 Rabbinical Council of America
 Religious Zionists of America
 Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
 Shomrei Emanah Congregation
 Suburban Orthodox Congregation
 Temple Beth Shalom
 Temple Isaiah
 Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

Background: Senate Bill 148 (SB148) would supplement federal funding for victim services programs when the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding fluctuates so that programs would not suffer major budget shortfalls. In each fiscal year the Governor would be required to include an appropriation that, together with the Federal VOCA funding, amounts to \$60 million for victim services programs. This supplemental funding would be housed in the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and its agencies. Through the agency CHANA, the Jewish response to abuse, trauma and neglect, people of all ages can receive crisis intervention, legal services and counseling on sexual, domestic, mental and financial abuse. Like many other crisis response organizations, CHANA relies in-part on federal VOCA dollars to fund its services. VOCA funding has recently drastically decreased, and while a federal fix was signed into law, it will take several years for the federal dollars to catch up. Further, the federal FY23 funding bill shows another cut to VOCA funding, around \$30 million less than funding five years ago.

SB148 provides much needed financial stability for victim service organizations to continue to serve their clients. **For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB148.**

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

OFFICERS

ELIZABETH GREEN
President

ROBIN WEIMAN
1st Vice President

AMALIA HONICK

BENJAMIN ROSENBERG

RABBI STEVEN SCHWARTZ

RABBI JONATHAN SEIDEMANN

MELANIE SHAPIRO

RABBI ANDREW BUSCH
Past President

HOWARD LIBIT
Executive Director

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation
American Jewish Committee
Americans for Peace Now
 Baltimore Chapter
American Israel Public Affairs Committee
American Red Magen David for Israel
American Zionist Movement
Amit Women
Association of Reform Zionists of America
Baltimore Board of Rabbis
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance
Baltimore Men's ORT
Baltimore Zionist District
Beth Am Congregation
Beth El Congregation
Beth Israel Congregation
Beth Shalom Congregation of
 Howard County
Beth Tfiloh Congregation
B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region
B'nai Israel Congregation
B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation
Bolton Street Synagogue
Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.
Chevrei Tzedek Congregation
Chizuk Amuno Congregation
Congregation Beit Tikvah
Congregation Tiferes Yisroel
Federation of Jewish Women's
 Organizations of Maryland
Hadassah
Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation
J Street
Jewish Federation of Howard County
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish War Veterans
Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary
Jewish Women International
Jews For Judaism
Moses Montefiore Anshe Emenah
 Hebrew Congregation
National Council of Jewish Women
Ner Tamid Congregation
Rabbinical Council of America
Religious Zionists of America
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Emenah Congregation
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

SB 148 Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Fe

Uploaded by: Tammy Bresnahan

Position: FAV



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmd
facebook.com/aarpmd

SB 148 Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)

House Appropriations and House Judiciary Committees

March 21, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chairs Barnes and Clippinger and members of the House Appropriations and Judiciary Committees. I am Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. On behalf of our almost 900,000 members, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of SB 148 Victim Services Program -Supplementing Federal Funding and Support Services Stabilization Act.

SB 148 provides for development, support, and continuity of victim services programs to provide trauma-informed, high-quality services for victims of crime including elder crimes and to stabilize funding and support for victim services programs by supplementing federal funding for victim services programs when federal victims of crime act funding fluctuate.

Elder crime takes many forms. It can be financial, physical, psychological, or a combination of these. It can take place at home or in an institutional setting. There are few nationally representative studies on the prevalence of elder abuse. One such survey sponsored by the National Institute of Justice found that 11 percent of adults age 60 and older experienced at least one form of abuse in the prior year. Like other forms of crime, it often occurs in hidden circumstances and is underreported. A study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health estimated that only 1 in 14 cases of abuse is reported.

AARP believes that states should sufficiently fund state victim compensation programs. They should provide expedited compensation in emergencies. The crime survivor's age and physical health should be taken into consideration in deciding on payments.

We applaud Chairman Guzzone for introducing this bill and respectfully as for a favorable report. If you have questions, please contact me at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451. Thank you.

