



National Association of Attorneys General

For Release: September 23, 2009

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STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL SUPPORT MORE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT GRANTS

Washington, DC---Attorneys General from 54 states and territories signed a letter sent to members of Congress expressing their support for the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009 (S. 1340; HR 3402). The bill would increase the maximum amount of annual Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grants to states over the next five years.

VOCA grants are allocated through the Crime Victims Fund, a special account dedicated to providing services to crime victims and made up entirely of fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders. The funds are crucial at the state level in educating victims, training for law enforcement, and administering programs providing compensation. The funds available to provide victims services have declined precipitously in recent years.

"Grants to state VOCA victim assistance programs fund services to more than four million victims of all types of crimes, including, domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, survivors of homicide victims, drunk driving crashes, stalking, identity theft, and elder abuse," the letter states.

The bill raises the cap on federal VOCA grants to \$705 million for fiscal year 2010, and then increases the cap by 23 percent each year through 2014.

"...this reasonable and sustainable increase in federal support will help to ensure that we are able to continue to support victims at a high level and for years to come."

The standards and formula for allocating the funds will not change and the Crime Victims Fund is projected to maintain a sustainable balance of at least \$800 million through 2014.

To view a copy of the letter, go to the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) Web site: http://www.naag.org/sign-on_archive.php

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The National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), www.naag.org, was founded in 1907 to help Attorneys General fulfill the responsibilities of their office and to assist in the delivery of high quality legal services to the states and territorial jurisdictions.

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September 23, 2009

Via Facsimile

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable John Conyers
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Senators Leahy and Sessions and Representatives Conyers and Smith:

We, the undersigned Attorneys General, write to express support for, and ask for your help in passing, Senate Bill 1340 (companion, HR 3402). Also called the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009, the bill was introduced by Senators Patrick Leahy and Mike Crapo, and will increase the maximum amount of annual VOCA (Victims Of Crime Act) grants to states over the next five years.

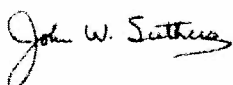
As you know, VOCA grants provide much-needed support to victims and victim service agencies throughout the nation. The grants are allocated through the Crime Victims Fund, a special account dedicated to providing services to crime victims and made up entirely of fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders. States receive these grants and administer programs providing compensation and education for victims, and training for law enforcement. Grants to state VOCA victim assistance programs fund services to more than 4 million victims of all types of crimes, including, domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, survivors of homicide victims, drunk driving crashes, stalking, identity theft, and elder abuse.

Because annual VOCA caps have not kept pace with the costs of providing victim services, states have been doing more with less. Likewise, because the caps have not kept pace with income to the Crime Victims Fund, the balance in the fund has risen to \$2 billion over the past two years. The Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009 will raise the cap on federal VOCA grants to \$705 million for fiscal year 2010, and then increase the cap by 23 percent each year through 2014. The standards and formula for allocating the funds will not change, and even with the increased caps, the Crime Victims Fund is projected to maintain a sustainable balance of at least \$800 million through 2014.

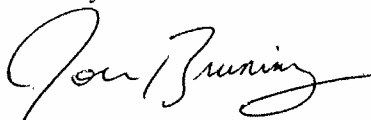
The funds available to provide victims services such as these have declined precipitously in recent years. Efforts are underway in the office's of VOCA state funds administrators to staunch that decline and to operate the Crime Victims Assistance and Prevention programming more efficiently. VOCA grants make up a large portion of this funding, and this reasonable and sustainable increase in federal support will help to ensure that we are able to continue to support victims at a high level and for years to come.

We urge you to preserve the intent of the offender-generated revenues and the assistance it provides to innocent victims by passing the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009.

Sincerely,



John W. Suthers
Attorney General of Colorado



Jon Bruning
Attorney General of Nebraska



Troy King
Attorney General of Alabama



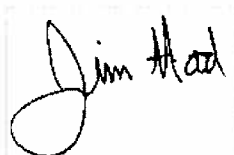
Fepulea'i Arthur Ripley Jr.
Attorney General of American Samoa



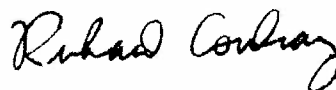
Dustin McDaniel
Attorney General of Arkansas



Richard Blumenthal
Attorney General of Connecticut



Jim Hood
Attorney General of Mississippi



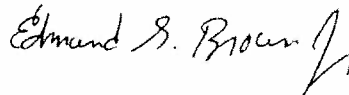
Richard Cordray
Attorney General of Ohio



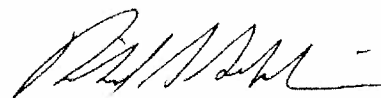
Daniel S. Sullivan
Attorney General of Alaska



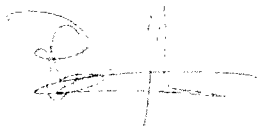
Terry Goddard
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Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Attorney General of California



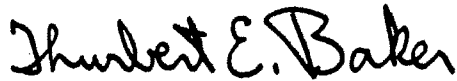
Richard S. Gebelein
Acting Attorney General of Delaware



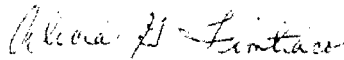
Peter Nickles
Attorney General of the District of Columbia



Bill McCollum
Attorney General of Florida



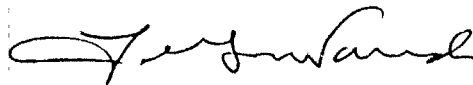
Thurbert E. Baker
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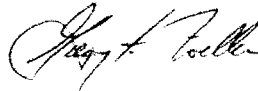
Mark J. Bennett
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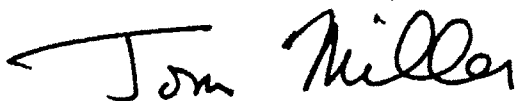
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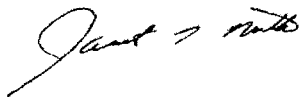
Steve Six
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Jack Conway
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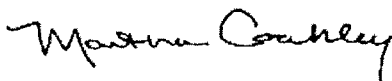
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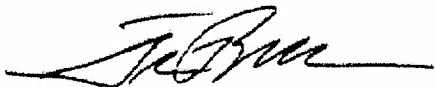
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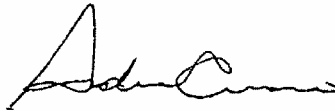
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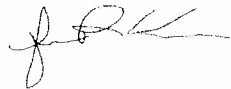
Roy Cooper
Attorney General of North Carolina



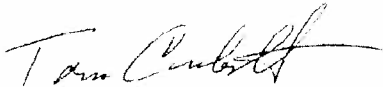
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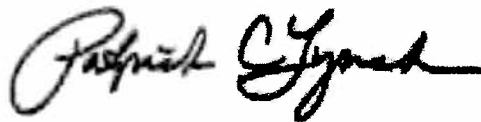
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