



ALASKA WOMEN'S LOBBY

AWL Mission: To defend and advance the rights and needs of Women, Children and Families in Alaska

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March 12, 2010

Dear Representative Kerttula:

Please accept this letter as one of support from the Alaska Women's Lobby for HJR 48, Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act. The Crime Victims Fund provides victim assistance dollars to eighteen programs across the state of Alaska and over 4,000 direct crime victim service agencies nationwide. The funds can only be used to provide direct services to crime victims and programs include domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, child abuse treatment programs, support groups for survivors of homicide victims and victims of drunk driving crashes, mental health counseling, crisis response programs, court-appointed special advocates, child advocacy centers, prosecutor and law enforcement-based victim assistance and many others.

S. 1340 and H.R. 3402, the Crime Victims Fund Preservation Act of 2009 would establish increasing minimum caps on annual Crime Victims Fund obligations through the year 2014. This is a sound idea and should be adopted by Congress. From its inception in 1984 until 2000, all moneys deposited into the Fund in any fiscal year were distributed to support victim services the following fiscal year. Since 2000, Congress has delayed or "capped" obligations from the Fund "to ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years" {Conf. Rpt. 106-479}. As a result of these caps, a substantial balance has been retained in the Fund. Unfortunately without a process in place to determine the caps there have been years when a cap has actually meant a decrease in funds to state victim assistance programs. A process for increasing the minimum caps will hopefully ensure that as much money as possible will be made available each year for victim assistance while meeting the goal of providing stable funding in the years ahead.

Thank you for introducing HJR 48. Adding Alaska's voice to those nationwide can only benefit the congressional debate.

Sincerely,

Steering Committee of the Alaska Women's Lobby