

Final budget agreement temporarily keeps safety net for crime victims intact

\$103 million in one-time funding backfills steep federal declines

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SACRAMENTO, CA - In response to Governor Newsom's approval of \$103 million in one-time funding for victims' services programs, Grace Glaser with VALOR, a member of the California VOCA Advocacy Alliance, released the following statement:

"Last year, Congress tore survivors' safety net in half with their failure to prevent a [44.7% reduction](#) in crime victims' services. Governor Newsom and the legislature have temporarily stitched it back together with their commitment to one-time backfill funding, ensuring that for now, victims will receive support during the most traumatic and dangerous times of their lives.

This is the result of efforts from [hundreds of advocates and survivors](#) urging California to step up. Their rallying cry was, "Don't balance the budget on the backs of survivors!"

Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes led the effort from the legislature, gathering [support from over half of the Assembly](#) and numerous Senators.

The Governor and the Legislature have shown that they understand the need for victims' services, which are core to California's safety net and helped 816,000 victims of sexual and domestic violence, child abuse, human trafficking, and so many others between FY 2021 and 2022. The investment in the state budget will allow organizations to provide services for survivors in 2024. For some organizations, it will prevent increased wait times and even office closures in rural communities. The High Desert Region's [Partners Against Violence](#) will now be able to keep their satellite office open. [Empower Yolo](#) now hopes to reopen their West Sacramento location after federal funding losses prevented them from renewing their lease.

This means that when survivors call a crisis hotline, there will be an advocate on the other end to answer; that survivors will be able to access shelter when they must flee from violence or lose their housing; that sexual assault survivors will have the support of an advocate during a medical exam; that children will feel supported and safe during forensic interviews; and so much more.

However, funding remains precarious and reductions will likely occur in the near future if federal funding does not rebound in this federal fiscal year, or without state support in the years ahead. We are grateful to the legislature for including ongoing funding in their initial budget plan, and will work to secure that commitment in future years to provide needed stability to survivors and service providers across the state.

To create a safer California, survivors must be able to process their trauma, meet their basic needs and begin to heal. Our coalition will be back next year, urging Governor Newsom and the Legislature to prioritize the needs of survivors of crime on an ongoing basis.”

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The California VOCA Advocacy Alliance consists of statewide organizations dedicated to supporting survivors of crime, advocates, and their communities. Our large coalition works to advance the rights of survivors of trafficking, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and others. With a common goal to advocate for our communities, we center equitable access to victim services in our decisions.