

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 23, 2012

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman
The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Hutchison:

As you begin work on the Commerce, Justice and Science appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2013, we respectfully request that you set the cap on spending from the Crime Victims Fund ("The Fund") as high as possible to support core Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) assistance programs and fulfill the needs of victims across the country. We also request that you oppose efforts to use The Fund to cover expenses other than those authorized by VOCA.

In FY 2000, Congress began limiting the amount of Crime Victims Fund deposits that could be obligated each year. This was in response to fluctuations in Fund deposits in order to ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years. That same year, Congress amended the law to ensure that all receipts remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years. These steps created a balance in the Fund for use in years when the deposits fell below the annual cap. These services are essential to numerous victims' assistance programs in every State.

We request that the Committee oppose rescissions to the Crime Victims Fund. We are concerned that the President has proposed spending money from the Crime Victims Fund for other purposes without taking steps to ensure the continued viability of the Fund. We request that the Committee oppose efforts to use the Crime Victims Fund to cover expenses other than those authorized for the Fund.

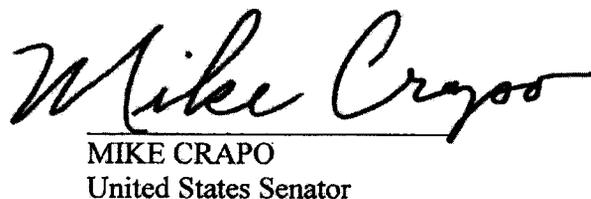
While the Fund's balance is growing, so is the need for victim assistance and compensation. During the past year, victim service professionals have seen a clear increase in victimization and victim need, as job losses and economic stress can translate into increased violence in the home and in our communities. The economic downturn has resulted in limits on state government funding and significant decreases in private giving. With the increased need for funding, and the ample balance in the Fund, now is the time to raise the cap on the Crime Victims Fund and release additional money for the purpose for which it was collected.

The balance in the Crime Victims Fund is more than enough to provide a significantly increased funding level without jeopardizing the Fund's future sustainability. Accordingly, we strongly urge the Committee to set the 2013 VOCA cap as high as possible to help continue meeting the dire needs of victims of all types of crime throughout the nation, and that you oppose efforts to use the Fund to cover expenses other than those authorized by VOCA.

Thank you for your leadership in this critical area and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator


MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



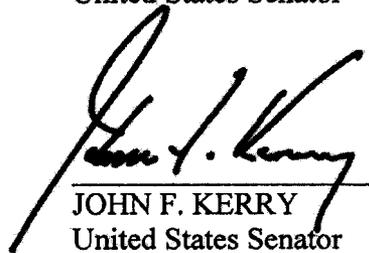
MAX BAUCUS
United States Senator



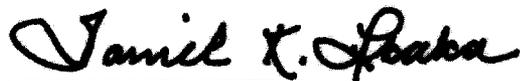
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
United States Senator



JOHN F. KERRY
United States Senator



DANIEL K. AKAKA
United States Senator



CHRISTOPHER A. COONS
United States Senator



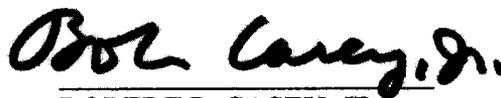
AL FRANKEN
United States Senator



RON WYDEN
United States Senator



KELLY AYOTTE
United States Senator



ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
United States Senator



BARBARA BOXER
United States Senator



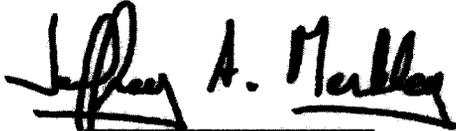
CARL LEVIN
United States Senator



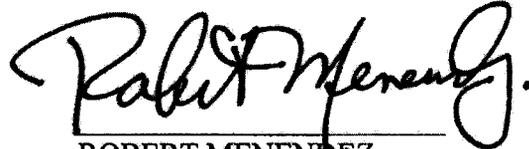
JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senator



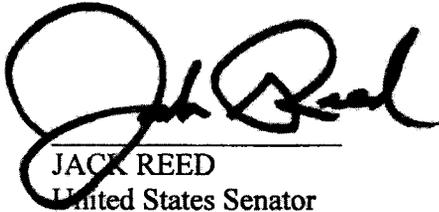
JON KYL
United States Senator



JEFF MERKLEY
United States Senator



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



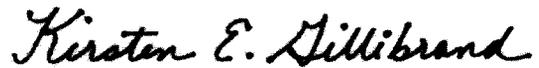
JACK REED
United States Senator



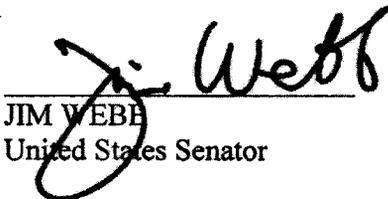
DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



FRANK R. LAUTENBERG
United States Senator



KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



JIM WEBB
United States Senator



TOM COBURN
United States Senator