Federal VOCA Educational Phone Script

Find your U.S. Senator and/or U.S. House Representative

When connected to a staffer or voicemail:

"Good **[morning/afternoon]**. My name is **[NAME]** and I'm a constituent from **[YOUR CITY / COUNTY]**. I work directly with victims of crime in our community, and as Congress considers funding priorities and budget decisions, I want to share the critical importance of Victims of Crime Act – or VOCA – funding and the urgent need to ensure victims and survivors in your district continue to receive support when they need it most.

"For more than 40 years, VOCA funding has been a cornerstone of Pennsylvania's response to crime, providing critical services that help victims of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, exploitation, gun violence and other crimes find safety, access counseling and emergency assistance, navigate the justice system, and rebuild their lives.

"Unfortunately, deposits to the federal Crime Victims Fund – which supports VOCA grants – have dropped drastically in recent years, from a high of $13 billion in 2018 to an anticipated $620 million for the start of 2027—the lowest opening balance for the fund in 26 years.

"At **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**, we provide essential support such **[insert services you provide]** to individuals affected by **[insert the victimizations your organization serves]** in our area. In the past year, we have served **[XX number]** victims in **[town, county, or community]**. VOCA funding plays a crucial role in enabling us to deliver these services.

"Declines in funding have forced Pennsylvania to impose two reductions totaling 12.5% to VOCA-funded programs, which have posed significant challenges for our **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**, including **[briefly describe your impacts, e.g., reductions in staff or services. Examples below:**

- **Cutting critical positions such as** [advocate, counselor, therapist, attorney, shelter, administrative positions, etc.].
- **Reducing/eliminating essential services such as** [shelter and housing programs, court/medical accompaniment, crisis response and on-call advocacy, counseling, therapy and trauma treatment, legal representation and civil legal assistance, etc.]

"Pennsylvania's annual VOCA award is expected to continue declining, and programs are now facing a significant cut next year, and up to an 80% reduction in the next two years if no action is taken.

"I am providing this context to help better inform you as you discuss increasing the VOCA cap and consider legislation like the Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act, which would transfer residual funds collected through the False Claims Act. Sustained and stable funding through VOCA helps ensure that organizations like ours can continue to provide critical, life-saving support to victims and survivors without interruption.

"If appropriate, I would be happy to coordinate a visit for **[Senator/Representative NAME]** and staff to **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]** to offer a firsthand view of how these programs operate

and the role VOCA plays in supporting our community.

“Thank you for your time and consideration."

Federal VOCA Educational Email Template

Find your U.S. Senator and/or U.S. House Representative

Subject: Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding

Dear **[Representative / Senator NAME]**,

"Good **[morning/afternoon]**. My name is **[NAME]** and I'm a constituent from **[YOUR CITY / COUNTY]**. I work directly with victims of crime in our community, and as Congress considers funding priorities and budget decisions, I want to share the critical importance of Victims of Crime Act – or VOCA – funding and the urgent need to ensure victims and survivors in your district continue to receive support when they need it most.

For more than 40 years, VOCA funding has been a cornerstone of Pennsylvania's response to crime, providing critical services that help victims of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, exploitation, gun violence, and other crimes find safety, access counseling and emergency assistance, navigate the justice system, and rebuild their lives.

Unfortunately, deposits to the federal Crime Victims Fund – which supports VOCA grants – have dropped drastically in recent years, from a high of $13 billion in 2018 to an anticipated $620 million for the start of 2027—the lowest opening balance for the fund in 26 years.

At **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**, we provide essential support such **[insert services you provide]** to individuals affected by **[insert the victimizations your organization serves]** in our area. In the past year, we have served **[XX number]** victims in **[town, county, or community]**. VOCA funding plays a crucial role in enabling us to deliver these services.

Declines in funding have forced Pennsylvania to impose two reductions totaling 12.5% on VOCA-funded programs, which have posed significant challenges for our **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**, including **[briefly describe your impacts, e.g., reductions in staff or services. Examples below:**

- **Cutting critical positions such as** advocate, counselor, therapist, attorney, shelter, administrative positions, etc.
- **Reducing/eliminating essential services such as** shelter and housing programs, court/medical accompaniment, crisis response and on-call advocacy, counseling, therapy and trauma treatment, legal representation and civil legal assistance, etc.**]**

Pennsylvania's annual VOCA award is expected to continue declining, and programs are now facing a significant cut next year, and up to an 80% reduction in the next two years if no action is taken.

I am providing this context to help better inform you as you discuss increasing the VOCA cap and consider legislation like the Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act, which would transfer residual funds collected through the False Claims Act. Sustained and stable funding through VOCA helps ensure that organizations like ours can continue to provide critical, life-saving support to victims and survivors without interruption.

If appropriate, I would be happy to coordinate a visit for **[Senator/Representative Last Name]** and staff to **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]** to offer a firsthand view of how these programs operate and the role VOCA plays in supporting our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME, TITLE]
[YOUR ORGANIZATION]
[YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS]
[YOUR PHONE NUMBER]