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# The Post

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## Crime Victims' Rights Week an opportunity for action

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*Letter to the Editor*

April 13-19 is National Crime Victims' Rights Week — a time for all Americans to remember those whose lives have been affected by crime, learn about the challenges crime victims face, reflect on the cost of crime to our society and promote laws, policies and programs to help victims of crime rebuild their lives. The week's theme, "Justice for Victims. Justice for All" suggests that because anyone can become a victim of crime, every person has powerful stake in victims' rights.

Currently, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) is in jeopardy of losing its desperately needed funding. President Bush's budget request for fiscal year 2009 includes a plan to eliminate the \$2 billion balance in the VOCA Fund, a non-taxpayer funded resource. This is a devastating cut to vital federal assistance that serves over three million crime victims each year in an attempt to ease the nation's budget crisis. Interestingly, all of the money comes directly from fines and fees levied from federal offenders. The funds are directly deposited into a "crime victim fund."

If this funding is eradicated, it will negatively affect all victims in every state and Congressional District. It is critical that every congressional office hears from constituents that oppose this funding cut. If you are not sure who your senators and/or representatives are, you can find out by accessing [www.congressmerge.com/onlineb/index.htm](http://www.congressmerge.com/onlineb/index.htm).

All are invited to join the Athens County Prosecuting Attorney's Victim Assistance Program on Tuesday at 2:30 p.m. for a flower planting dedication ceremony in front of the entrance to the Athens County Courthouse, to honor Athens County crime victims and those that serve to assist them. For more information or to obtain a ribbon, please contact the Athens County Victim Assistance Program at 592-3212.

**Denise Brook is the director of the Victim Assistance Program.**  
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This article has been viewed 164 times.

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