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2ND DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEES:  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
FOUNDER OF CONGRESSIONAL  
VICTIM'S RIGHTS CAUCUS



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4302

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March 10, 2009

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Protect Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and the Crime Victims Fund

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, we have strongly supported the critical services needed by the millions of Americans who have become victims of crime. Since 1984, the Federal government has been a leader in providing financial support for these services, largely through the innovative Crime Victims Fund. The Fund is a non-taxpayer trust created exclusively to support state crime victim compensation and direct assistance services. The Fund derives its revenues from fines and other penalties collected from violations of Federal criminal law. More than 4,200 agencies depend on these resources to help more than 4 million victims of all types of crime.

VOCA and the Crime Victims Fund have, over the past 25 years, proven to be an effective and efficient program serving a critical need. Because of wide fluctuations in Fund deposits, in 2000, Congress began delaying annual Fund obligations in order to ensure a stable long-term source of funding for victim services. By amending the VOCA statute, Congress reiterated its intention that all Fund deposits and Fund balance be retained in the Fund for the sole purpose of supporting victim programs.

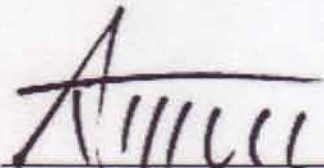
Despite its success and effectiveness, the past four budget submissions have proposed rescinding the Fund balance and prospective annual Fund collections and transferring those amounts into the General Treasury. Congress has resoundingly rejected each and every proposal to rescind the Fund. There has not been one vote in any committee or on the floor of Congress, nor has there been any statement in the Congressional Record in support of rescinding the Crime Victims Fund. Indeed, both you and Vice-President Biden have publicly opposed those rescission efforts.

In light of this universal opposition to a rescission of the Fund, we were surprised to see a reference to rescinding the Fund contained in the 2010 Budget documents released on February 26, 2009. A chart of Department of Justice spending on page 82 of those documents contains a note that "Agency totals do not include enacted or proposed rescissions from the Asset Forfeiture or Crime Victims Fund." Since, as noted, there has never been a rescission of the Crime Victims Fund enacted, we can only read this to suggest that a rescission from the Fund is under consideration by the Administration.

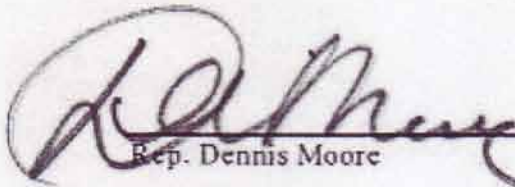
A decision to rescind the Fund would be unwise. Not only will it deprive crime victims of vital, often life-saving services, but would most likely result in the use of taxpayer funds to replace funds that have already paid into the Fund by criminal offenders.

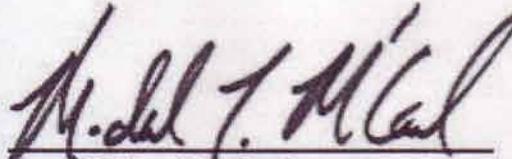
We join with the more than 40 national victim advocacy and criminal justice organizations that wrote to you on February 9, 2009 requesting that you reject any suggestion that the Administration seek to continue efforts to rescind the Crime Victims Fund and to request a funding level that, at a minimum, restores funding for state victim assistance grants to an adequate level.


Sincerely,

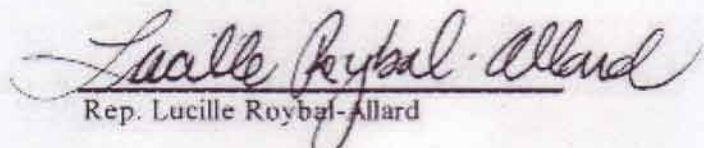
  
Rep. Ted Poe

  
Rep. Jim Costa

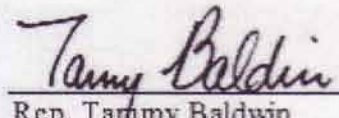
  
Rep. Dennis Moore

  
Rep. Michael McCaul

  
Rep. Dennis Cardoza

  
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard

  
Rep. Tim Holden

  
Rep. Tammy Baldwin

cc: Peter Orszag  
Director  
The Office of Management and Budget  
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