



2/7/2024

Re: HB 4140 Relating to victims; declaring an emergency.

Dear Representative Kropf, Representative Neron, Senator Sollman, Representative Javadi, Senator Campos, Gelser Blouin, and others,

My name is Christina McGovney, the Program Director of Home Free with Volunteers of America Oregon in the Portland Metro region. Home Free, our domestic and sexual violence program, where we offer essential lifesaving services to our community. We focus on all sides of the issue of ending violence in our community through prevention education and confidential youth advocacy, to immediate crisis and safety situations to help survivors flee from violence and access safer motels or shelters, and housing programming and long-term stabilization supports which include economic empowerment programming. All our services are 100% free, voluntary, and confidential. We have several out stationed programs with advocates in Portland Public High Schools, advocates embedded within health clinics, and advocates operating out of the Multnomah County Courthouse. We have three hotlines: Our Emergency Services Hotline, our Restraining Order Hotline, and our Portland Public Schools hotline.

I am writing to day to show my support for a crucial house bill that support survivors of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, dating violence, stalking, and sex trafficking across our state. I support all the nonprofits in my community that do the critical lifesaving work helping survivors flee from abusive situations and rebuild their lives after experiencing physical violence, emotional and psychological abuse, economic abuse, spiritual abuse, coercion, reproductive coercion, and so much more. I implore you to support stable and ongoing funding for the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (ODSVS) fund and the Survivor Housing Fund (SHF). ODSVS and SHF are each essential funding sources that allow Oregon's network of nonprofit, community-based, tribal, and culturally specific domestic and sexual violence service providers across the state to ensure that survivors have access to confidential, culturally specific and responsive, trauma-informed support and assistance as they seek safety from abuse.

The Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (ODSVS) distributes funds to more than 60 community-based, culturally specific, and Tribal programs across the state of Oregon to provide confidential trauma-informed services for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and sex trafficking. These community-based nonprofits support youth and adult survivors with wide-ranging crisis intervention and long-term supportive services such as emergency shelter, 24/7 crisis lines, legal advocacy, emergency and long-term safety-planning, counseling, support groups and youth programs. These programs also provide prevention education in schools as well as training and education throughout the community. Community-based domestic and sexual violence programs intersect with many state systems, including the public health and public

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Home Free is the domestic and sexual violence program of Volunteers of America Oregon, serving survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Volunteers of America Oregon is an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization registered within the state of Oregon that provides human services to populations in need.



HOME
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safety systems. These programs have built collaborations with law enforcement, healthcare providers, schools, the criminal justice system, social services agencies, and many other community partners, and offer critical support for survivors navigating these structures. ODSVS is the only state general fund source of support for these truly life savings services. The need for these supportive services continues to grow and the burden of essential service provision is challenged by staffing shortages, lack of funding, and other barriers for those trying to flee domestic and sexual violence. ODSVS funds directly support nonprofit helping over 5,000 survivors annually in accessing shelter to provide safety options when fleeing from violence and abuse, and helps those organizations answer over 90,000 calls across our state.

The SHF fund distributes funds to more than 60 community-based, culturally specific, and Tribal programs across the state of Oregon to facilitate access to safer and more stable housing for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and sex trafficking. With domestic violence being one of the leading causes of homelessness for women, SHF assistance is a crucial component of the efforts to assist survivors in their journey towards stable permanent housing. Without secure and more stable housing, healing from violence and abuse becomes nearly impossible. The SHF supports survivors by providing supportive services and the financial assistance resources necessary to address barriers in accessing housing. This may include moving assistance, application fees, security deposits, and other non-rent move-in costs. These critical and flexible funds help survivors begin this new stage in their lives on solid ground. Our data shows these funds support more than 80% survivors of colors, over 30% survivors with disabilities, and over 90% of survivors acquired or maintained stable housing.

The long-term stabilization of funding for ODSVS and SHF, administered by Department Of Justice's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division (CVSSD), will provide programs with the resources to further develop capacity and build a statewide infrastructure designed for sustainability and equity in meeting the needs of survivors. The stability of this funding is necessary to stabilize programs, meet the rising need for safety services, and offer wages designed to recruit and retain skilled workers and administrators.

We deeply encourage your support for HB 4140 regarding ODSVS and SHF funds.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina McGovney".

Christina McGovney [she | her]

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