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MOVA ADVOCATES FOR \$20M IN VICTIM SERVICE FUNDING THROUGH “VOCA BRIDGE”

BOSTON, MA., Oct. 12, 2023 -The Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) partnered with Representative Marjorie Decker and Senator Joanne Comerford to host a legislative briefing at the Massachusetts State House to support advocacy efforts for the “[VOCA Bridge](#)”, a request to the Massachusetts Legislature to avoid catastrophic funding cuts to victim service programming which would jeopardize free support for crime victims across the state.

The VOCA Bridge, a \$20 million funding request to mitigate impending cuts to programs traditionally supported by the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), will preserve victim service funding in fiscal year 2025 (FY25). VOCA funding is at a historical low which impacts funding available for programming in every county in Massachusetts. An investment from the state will support and stabilize critical victim service programs throughout the Commonwealth and ensure that access to trauma-informed services remains accessible amid devastating reductions in federal funding.

“Victim service programs in Massachusetts are serving unprecedented increases of survivors seeking assistance with less money,” said MOVA Executive Director Liam Lowney. “Devastating funding cuts will result in a loss of jobs for service providers and a loss of critical support for victims and survivors without passage of the VOCA Bridge.”

Without a \$20M lifeline investment from the Legislature, all programs funded by MOVA will have services and funding reduced on July 1, 2024. Less funding will be available for crime victim support services, despite the reality that the demand for services has increased.

At the briefing, attendees heard from MOVA Executive Director Liam Lowney, VOCA Bridge champion Representative Decker, and an [impressive panel of service providers](#) that are at risk of funding cuts, including Chaplain Clementina Chéry, Founder, President and CEO, Louis D. Brown Peace Institute; Diana Mancera, CEO, New Hope, Inc.; Dr. Jeffrey Trant, Executive Director, Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin; and Beth Leventhal, Founder and Executive Director, The Network/La Red.

To date, the Legislature has allocated \$40 million to support the VOCA Bridge in fiscal year 2023 (FY23) and fiscal year 2024 (FY24). To learn more about advocacy efforts for the VOCA Bridge, please visit the MOVA [digital toolkit](#).

MOVA is an independent state agency who strives to advance victim rights by ensuring all victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth are supported and empowered. MOVA operates under the guidance of the VWAB whom oversee MOVA's priorities, including administering state and federal funds for victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth through the Federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA).