

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 10, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Moran
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen:

We write to you today to urge your support for funding the programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the fiscal year 2019 appropriations process with appropriated funds, in order to ensure that crimes collection money allocated for the Crime Victims Fund will be devoted exclusively to assisting victims of crime.

Originally enacted in 1994, VAWA has helped hundreds of thousands of women by providing access to critical services such as domestic violence shelters, legal aid, and counseling services. In addition to providing services to crime victims, VAWA has raised public awareness about sexual and domestic violence and helped to improve the criminal justice system's response to these crimes. It is critical that these cost-effective programs be funded generously.


Similarly, the Crime Victims Fund was established by Congress in 1984 to support crime survivors by providing medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, courtroom advocacy, temporary housing, and much more. The Fund is unique because all the money in it derives from fines and restitution paid by criminals convicted of federal crimes and not from taxpayers. Unfortunately, the Fund's effectiveness has been weakened in recent years due to the establishment of an appropriations cap on the distribution of money from the Fund. Additionally, \$1.5 billion in the Fund was rescinded in 2015 to provide an offset for a budget agreement with the Obama Administration.


Congress must uphold the commitment it made to victims with the establishment of the Crime Victims Fund. To do so, the cap on the Crime Victims Fund should be set as high as possible during this year's appropriations. Moreover, every last penny brought into the Fund should be used to help victims of crime rather than as funding for other projects unrelated to crime victims' services. We also urge the Subcommittee to boost outlays from the Fund sufficient to provide for an appropriate funding stream for Tribes. Individuals on tribal lands experience high rates of domestic and sexual violence and resources from the Fund are critical in addressing tribal victims' needs.

Thank you for your past support of these programs and related resources for victims of crime. We encourage you to continue to do all that you can to make services to victims and survivors a continued priority in this year's appropriations process.

Sincerely,

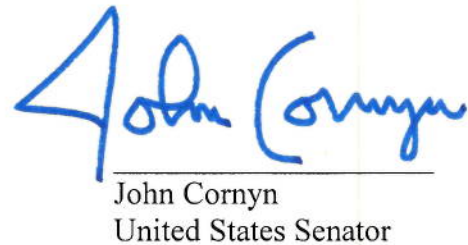

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator


Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

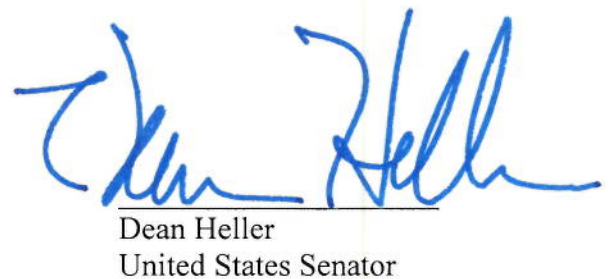

Mike Crapo
United States Senator


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator


Thom Tillis
United State Senator

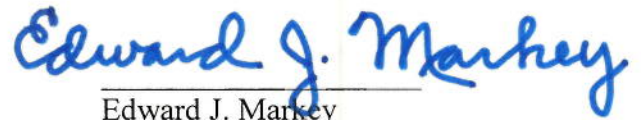

John Cornyn
United States Senator


Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

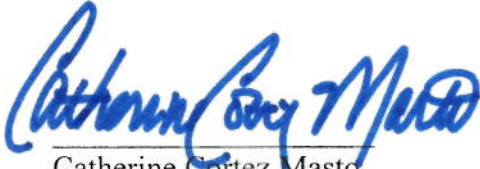

Dean Heller
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



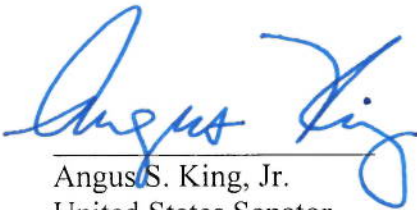
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



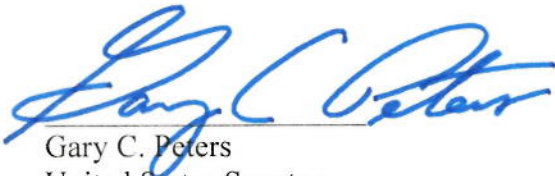
Tom Udall
United States Senator



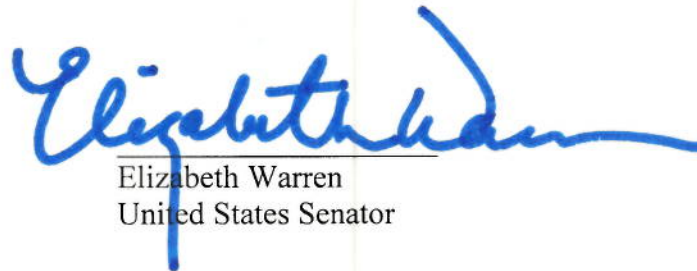
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



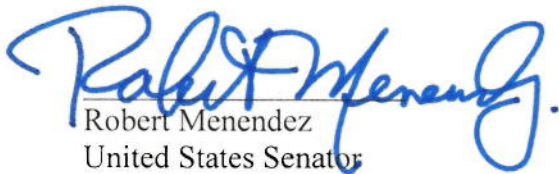
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



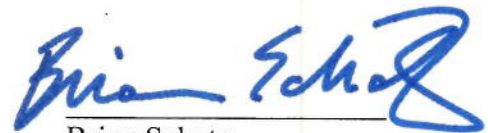
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator




Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



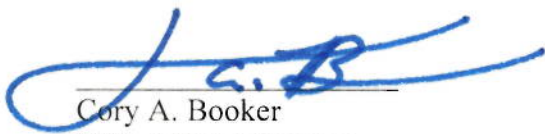
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



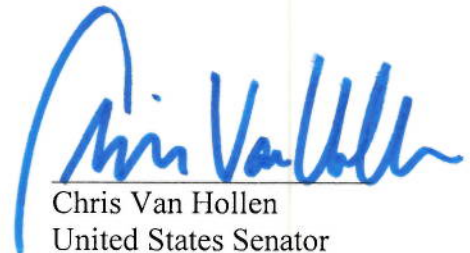
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



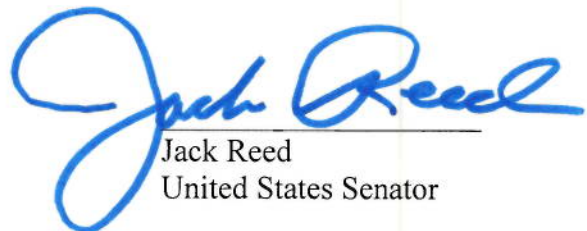
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



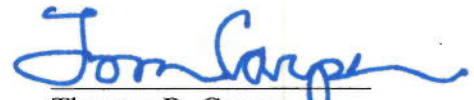
Jon Tester
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



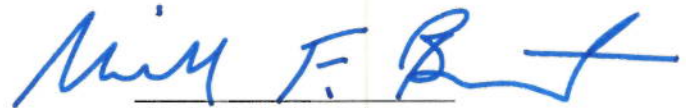
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



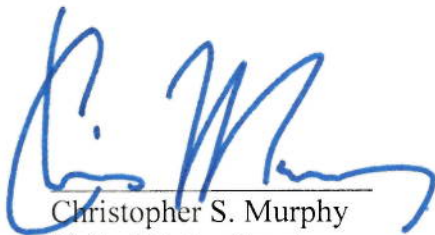
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



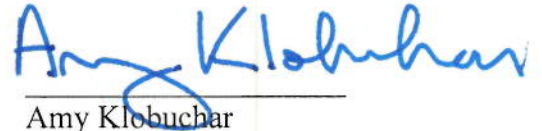
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



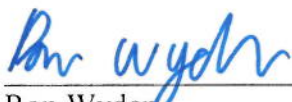
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



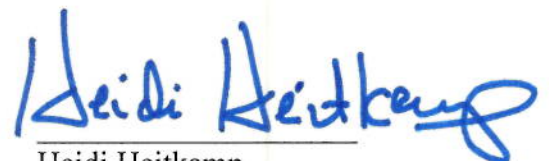
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



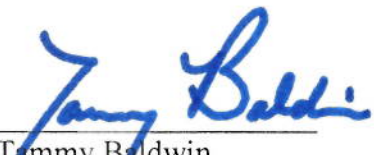
Tina Smith
United States Senator




Ron Wyden
United States Senator




Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator




Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
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