



BILL NUMBER: SB 148

TITLE: *Victim Services Programs - Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)*

COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation

HEARING DATE: 01/25/2023

POSITION: Support

TurnAround, Inc. respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 148. This bill would require the state to fund up to \$60 million if a need arises as a result of a temporary gap in federal funding through the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and allow providers like TurnAround to continue offering Maryland victims crucial services at the same expert level of care we always have.

At TurnAround, our VOCA awards grant funds crisis response services to survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and human trafficking. We need VOCA funding to train and retain expert staff capable of providing immediate complex care.

A mother of three in a violent intimate partnership contacted TurnAround while the abuser was out of the house temporarily. The abuse was becoming more dangerous, and this survivor had decided to find safety for her kids and herself.

She had 90 minutes before he returned.

TurnAround employs a fiercely dedicated professional staff of crisis response coordinators who knew how to get this done. Her family was in a safe location before the abuser got home.

When VOCA funding is uncertain, interrupted and cut, the lack of continuity and predictability impacts staff retention and damages the continuity of care we can provide. So many survivors with urgent needs will suffer.

In 2022, our VOCA grant award provided \$170,000 in client financial assistance — more than 30% higher than last year. We were able to answer 3,567 helpline calls and texts, including 623 crisis calls and 1,589 calls for a safe place to sleep. More than 12,000 people engaged with us through social media, including the mother who contacted us through Facebook with less than 2 hours to receive our help.

When a survivor has 90 minutes to get her family to safety, waiting for the VOCA funding gap to close isn't an option.

TurnAround is a leader in coordinated crisis response to survivors of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and human trafficking. The rape crisis center for Baltimore City and Baltimore County, the organization provides survivors of all identities free, comprehensive services, including emergency shelter, mental health care, legal guidance, and a 24-hour hotline and text line.

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