

Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee:
Human Resources Division
Testimony Presented Seth O'Neill, JD, MSW
Email: soneill@nddsvc.org
March 10, 2025

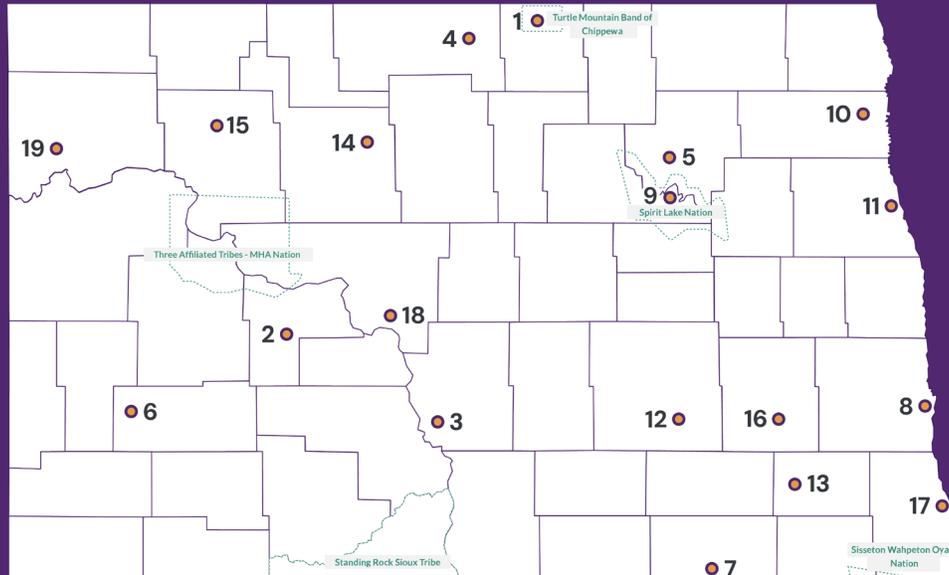
Chairman Nelson and the Members of the Committee, my name is Seth O'Neill, and I represent the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition, in support of SB2015.

SB2015 includes \$7 million for supplemental funding for crime victim services due to the decline in the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. The member organizations of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition rely on VOCA funding to provide important services to victims of domestic and sexual violence. Attached to my written testimony, I have provided letters from a few of these programs discussing the need for this funding.

Chairman Nelson, we encourage the committee to give SB2015 a "Do-Pass" recommendation with the \$7 million for crime victim services. I look forward to testifying at a future public hearing to explain more how essential these services are. Thank You.



Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Victim Advocacy Centers



1. Hearts of Hope
 Belcourt - Turtle Mountain
 Band of Chippewa
 Crisis Line: 701.477.0002
 Office: 701.477.0002
 Email: gourneau@utma.com

**2. Women's Action &
 Resource Center**
 Beulah
 Crisis Line: 701.873.2274
 Office: 701.873.2274
 mercerwar.com

**3. Abused Adult
 Resource Center**
 Bismarck
 Crisis Line: 866.341.7009
 Office: 701.222.8370
 abusedadultresourcecenter.com

4. Family Crisis Center
 Bottineau
 Crisis Line: 800.398.1098
 Office: 701.228.2028
 famcrisiscenter.org

**5. Safe Alternatives for
 Abused Families**
 Devils Lake
 Crisis Line: 701.409.0665
 Office: 701.662.7378
 saafnd.org

**6. Domestic Violence &
 Rape Crisis Center**
 Dickinson
 Crisis Line: 888.225.4506
 Office: 701.225.4506
 dvrcnd.com

7. Kedish House
 Ellendale
 Crisis Line: 877.349.4729
 Office: 701.349.4729
 kedish-house.com

**8. Rape & Abuse
 Crisis Center**
 Fargo
 Crisis Line: 800.344.7273
 Office: 701.293.7273
 raccfm.com

**9. Spirit Lake Victim
 Assistance**
 Fort Totten - Spirit Lake
 Nation
 Crisis Line: 701.766.1816
 Office: 701.766.1816
 spiritlakenation.com/programs/
 spirit-lake-victim-assistance/

**10. Domestic Violence &
 Abuse Center Inc.**
 Grafton
 Crisis Line: 866.435.7490
 Office: 701.331.0466
 dvacnd.org

**11. Community Violence
 Intervention Center**
 Grand Forks
 Crisis Line: 866.746.8900
 Office: 701.746.0405
 cviconline.org

12. Safe Shelter
 Jamestown
 Crisis Line: 888.353.7233
 Office: 701.251.2300
 safeshelterjamestown.org

13. Abuse Resource Network
 Lisbon
 Crisis Line: 701.683.5061
 Office: 701.683.5061
 abuseresourcenetwork.org

**14. Domestic Violence
 Crisis Center**
 Minot
 Crisis Line: 701.852.2258
 Office: 701.852.2258
 courage4change.org

**15. Domestic Violence
 Program NW ND**
 Stanley
 Crisis Line: 800.273.8232
 Office: 701.628.3233
 dvpnwnd.weebly.com

**16. Abused Persons
 Outreach Center**
 Valley City
 Crisis Line: 701.845.0072
 Office: 701.845.0078
 apocnd.org

17. Three Rivers Crisis Center
 Wahpeton
 Crisis Line: 701.642.2115
 Office: 701.642.2115
 threeriverscrisiscenter.com

**18. McLean Family
 Resource Center**
 Washburn
 Crisis Line: 701.462.8643
 Office: 701.462.8643
 mcleanfr.com

19. Family Crisis Shelter
 Williston
 Crisis Line: 701.770.5180
 Office: 701.572.0757
 familycrisisshelter.com



Women's Action and Resource Center
PO Box 940
Beulah, ND 58523
p: 701.873.2274 | e: warc@westriv.com

Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
WOMEN'S ACTION & RESOURCE CENTER
March 10, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Gloria Olheiser and I am the Director of Women's Action and Resource Center. Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition.

I am writing in support of the VOCA supplemental funding included in SB2015 for victim services grants. Women's Action & Resource Center (WARC) provides services for Mercer, Oliver & the eastern quarter of Dunn Counties. Our services include but are not limited to 24/7 crisis line, emergency shelter, information and referrals, advocacy for judicial, employment, housing, medical as well as counseling services, crisis intervention, information & referrals & food pantry. We assist victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, dating violence, family violence, elder abuse, stalking and more.

The VOCA dollars we get in our grant assists us to continue to provide these services as the need continues to grow. The VOCA grant provides dollars for emergency services such as rent, utilities (past due/shut off notices), deposit, 1st months rent up to 3 months rent IF needed. In addition, the grant does pay for part of the advocates wages along with shelter supervisors in our emergency shelter along with overtime or shift differential, fringe, counseling. Our phone bill, public presentation materials and travel and professional development for advocates to attend trainings with EVAWI, CCAW, Alliance for Hope and more so they may better advocate for our victims and assist them to the best of our ability. To lose part of or all of the dollars in this grant or any grant would be very devastating to our service area as the need continues to grow from year to year.



Women's Action and Resource Center
PO Box 940
Beulah, ND 58523
p: 701.873.2274 | e: warc@westriv.com

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gloria Olheiser

Director

Women's Action and Resource Center

701-873-2274-Office

10am-4pm Monday - Friday

701-880-7871-Work Cell



Abuse Resource Network & Therapy
PO Box 919 - 13 11th Ave W - Lisbon, ND 58054
701.683.5061 - info@arn-therapy.org - www.abuseresourcenetwork.org

Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
Abuse Resource Network
March 10, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Liz Anderson, and I am the Executive Director of The Abuse Resource Network & Therapy. Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition.

I am writing in support of the VOCA supplemental funding included in SB2015 for victim services grants. Our agency uses VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) funding to provide essential services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Specifically, the VOCA funding helps cover the cost of direct services, such as addiction counseling and therapy for survivors, legal advocacy, case management, and crisis intervention. This funding allows us to offer these services free of charge, ensuring that anyone in need can access support regardless of their financial situation. With our agency being 180 miles round trip to the nearest mental health services, this funding is crucial in assisting providing these services. VOCA funds also support the training and salaries of our dedicated staff, helping us maintain a highly trained team equipped to handle the complex needs of survivors.

The supplemental state funding is crucial to bridging the gap between the VOCA funding and the growing demands of our services. It helps us address immediate, urgent needs, such as emergency shelter, food, transportation, and legal assistance, which are not always fully covered by VOCA funds. Without the state supplemental funding, our agency would be forced to scale back services, leading to longer waiting times for therapy and other critical services. In the worst-case scenario, we may need to reduce staffing or cut certain programs, which could result in survivors not receiving the comprehensive support they need in a timely manner.

Therefore, supplemental state funding is vital to ensure that our agency can continue to offer holistic, responsive care to all survivors in need.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Liz Anderson

Executive Director

Abuse Resource Network & Therapy

landerson@arn-therapy.org 701.683.5061



PO Box 308
Grafton, ND 58237
PH: 701-331-0466
FX: 701-352-4222

Senate Bill No. 2015

**House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
Domestic Violence & Abuse Center (DVAC)
March 10, 2025**

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Tara Balstad and I am the Executive Director of the Domestic Violence & Abuse Center (DVAC). Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition and our service area covers Walsh, Pembina, and Cavalier Counties in Northeast North Dakota.

I am writing in support of the VOCA supplemental funding included in SB2015 for victim services grants. DVAC is an organization dedicated to providing essential support and advocacy for victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a pervasive issue that impacts individuals, families, and communities, often resulting in profound physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding plays a critical role in sustaining the efforts of organizations like DVAC, enabling us to offer comprehensive services that address the multifaceted needs of survivors. Continued funding from VOCA is imperative for us to maintain the consistency and stability of our services. Domestic violence survivors in our tri-county area rely on the availability of these services, and any disruption in funding can have detrimental effects on their safety and well-being. Stable funding allows DVAC to plan and implement long-term programs that address the evolving needs of survivors and ensures those survivors receive the support they need to heal and rebuild their lives.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tara Balstad
Executive Director
Domestic Violence & Abuse Center (DVAC)
tara@dvacnd.org
(701) 331-0193



Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
Laura Nash Frisch
March 10, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Laura Nash Frisch and I am the Vice President of Victim Witness and Visitation at the Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC) in Grand Forks, ND. Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition.

I am writing in support of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) supplemental funding included in SB 2015 for victim services grants. These funds provide critical services to victims of crime in our community, funding three direct service areas, crisis advocacy, therapy, and crime victim witness services. Up until the 2024-2025 federal fiscal year, VOCA represented more than \$750,000 of our annual operating revenue, and has been a steady source of funding for decades. Due to decreases in the fund at the federal level, our VOCA award this year was just under \$517,000, a 37% decrease over the previous year.

Without state intervention, the impact on crime victims would be devastating. VOCA funds are used almost exclusively to serve victims, so a reduction at this level would leave victims with fewer options to turn to for help. Victims would be met with waiting lists for services like therapy, delayed crisis intervention response to urgent calls from law enforcement, medical partners, and schools, limited assistance with civil protection orders, and reduced security and staffing at our 24-hour emergency shelter. In short, nearly every service currently available to victims at our agency would be negatively impacted.



Additionally, VOCA is a key source of funding for victim witness services provided alongside the Grand Forks County States Attorney's Office. These services **uphold mandated standards in North Dakota law** found in the Fair Treatment Standards for Victims and Witnesses, NDCC 12.1-34 and Marsy's Law, Article I, Section 25 in the state constitution. Reductions in this program would endanger crime victims who may not receive notice when violent offenders are being released from correctional centers and would place a greater burden on the States Attorney's Office to carry out timely notices of hearings, plea agreements and dispositions, gather victim impact statements, assist with crime victims' compensation and more.

Each year, **CVIC serves over 3,000 victims of crime in the Grand Forks region**. A 37% decrease would impact at least 1,110 of these victims. We urge the committee to vote in favor of the \$7,000,000 allocated to fill the gap left by reductions in the federal VOCA fund. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Nash Frisch

Laura Nash Frisch
Vice President of Victim Witness and Visitation
Community Violence Intervention Center
Grand Forks, ND
701-746-0405



Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
Three Rivers Crisis Center
March 10, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Susan Rittenour and I am the Director of Three Rivers Crisis Center (TRCC) in Wahpeton. Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition.

I am writing in support of the VOCA supplemental funding included in SB2015 for victim services grants. TRCC uses VOCA funding to help support the salaries of its Director, Client Services Coordinator, and Counselor. VOCA also helps fund a portion of rent, telecommunication, supplies, and emergency assistance to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The loss of supplemental state funding would impact all these areas with the greatest impact on staff and rent.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

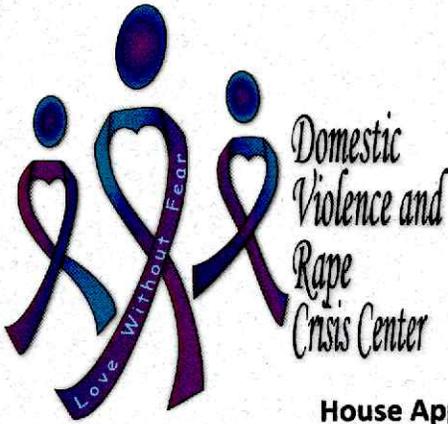
Susan K Rittenour

Director

Three Rivers Crisis Center

susan@threeriverscrisiscenter.com

701-642-2115



Senate Bill No. 2015
House Appropriations Committee – Human Resources Division
Darriane D. Johnson
March 10, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Darriane Johnson, and I am the Executive Director of the Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Center in Dickinson. Our organization is a member of the North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition.

I am writing in support of the VOCA supplemental funding included in SB2015 for victim services grants. VOCA is one of DVRCC's largest grants and provides money for salaries for all 6 of our domestic violence and sexual assault advocates. These advocates help our clients with getting housing, finding employment, getting their kids into school and any other service that the client may need. Without VOCA money, we would have to work with only 5 advocates as we would not have the funding to pay for 6 salaries. Our agency covers 8 counties which include: Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope and Stark counties. This is a land mass of 10,002 square miles.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Darriane D. Johnson

Executive Director

Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Center

Darriane D. Johnson

darriane_dvrcc@hotmail.com

701-225-4506