

Memorandum
House Judiciary Committee
February 18, 2021

As a follow up to my testimony to the House Appropriations Committee this afternoon on behalf of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (CCVS), I have drafted some language to add to the budget regarding fees and funding for victim services. We would appreciate your committee's support of this proposal

CCVS administers three different funds: The Victims' Compensation Fund, the Restitution Fund, and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Fund. The funds were established for a particular purpose and have specific funding sources.

In 2013, a study committee was formed to look at this issue. The study committee concluded that:
The evidence demonstrates clearly that in the near future the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services' sources of funding will be insufficient to meet the needs of crime victims.

The report laid out steps to take to address the lack of sustainability of the funding sources. However, as of today, our funding model remains unsustainable. Therefore, we are requesting that a study committee be convened to look at developing a sustainable plan for funding victim services into the future.

We are proposing the following language to be added to the FY 2022 budget:

Sec. XXX Funding for Crime Victim Services; Study Committee

(a) Creation. There is created the Crime Victim Services Funding Study Committee to examine the existing funding source(s) for services for victims of crime in Vermont.

(b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) One member of the House Committee on Appropriations, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- (2) One member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, appointed by the Committee on Committees;
- (3) One member of the House Committee on Judiciary, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- (4) One member of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, appointed by the Committee on Committees;



- (5) The Executive Director of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services
 - (6) The Executive Director of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence;
 - (7) The Attorney General or designee;
 - (8) The Executive Director of the State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs or designee;
 - (9) The Commissioner of Corrections or designee;
 - (10) The Commissioner of Public Safety or designee; and
 - (11) The Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families or designee.
- (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall examine:
- (1) Current funding sources for victim’s services in general;
 - (2) Funding sources for services for victims of domestic and sexual violence, including the Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Special Fund;
 - (3) Past trends in solvency of those funding sources;
 - (4) Sustainability of those funding sources for the future.
 - (5) Analysis of services for victims, including what services are provided, who provides the services, where services are provided, and when services are provided
 - (6) The viability of phasing out the use of special funds for victim services over a five-year period and replacing special funds with state general funds;
- (d) Assistance. The committee shall have assistance from the Joint Fiscal Office.
- (e) Report. A report shall be due to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on or before November 1, 2021.
- (f) Meetings.
- (1) The Executive Director of the Center for Crime Victims Services shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before July 15, 2021.
 - (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.
 - (3) A majority of the membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.
 - (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on October 31, 2021.
- (g) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Committee who are not employees of the State of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for their attendance shall not be entitled to compensation.

