



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

250 Sexual and Domestic Violence Advocates and Survivors Rally at the Capitol to Demand Funding

Advocates Tell California Leaders, "Don't Balance the Budget on Survivors' Backs"

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SACRAMENTO, CA - This week, more than 250 survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence and the service providers who work with them [rallied at the California Capitol](#) to demand funding for crime victim services. Facing unprecedented threats to their funding, safety net programs serving survivors are pressing state leaders to prioritize victims' services funding in the final California budget, arguing that cuts would compromise public safety at a time when Governor Newsom and legislators are focusing their efforts and rhetoric on it.

Speakers, including legislators and community partners, called for state leaders to back survivors and fund crime victim services.

Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo, who represents the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys, is leading a request for \$260 million in one-time funding from the state. She urged her peers in the California Assembly to support crime victim services and highlighted how essential the services are, explaining, "Every day survivors of violence, abuse, and tragedy summon the courage to reach out for help. And every day victim service providers are there to answer the call and offer safety, healing, and hope. These services are not luxuries, they are lifelines."

Senator Susan Rubio, who represents the San Gabriel Valley in the Senate and is a domestic violence survivor, shared how she is still being impacted by domestic violence after 10 years of restraining orders. She reiterated the importance of survivors receiving services during their time of need, from immediately after trauma to 10 years later and beyond, saying, "We're talking about the lifeline that is so critically important for these survivors to survive... This is not just about money on paper, this is about our lives. This is about staying alive, staying healthy."

Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, who represents the San Gabriel Valley in the Assembly, shared how domestic violence affects both the survivor of the abuse, but also how hopeless feelings are shared by their families. She emphasized that without the state stepping in to level fund crime victim services in California, advocates and organizations will not be able to continue supportive legal and family services that survivors depend on to heal.

Perla Flores, Senior Division Director at Community Solutions in the South Bay region of Northern California, shared statistics of how many people in California accessed crime survivor services, with [816,000 in FY 22-23 alone](#). Flores then went on to say, “Access to advocacy and support services should be a basic human right for crime survivors. Survivors should not have to return year after year, begging for the critical services that they need and deserve to achieve healing and justice.”

Also on this day, the National Network to End Domestic Violence released their [Domestic Violence Counts Report](#). The report showed that in one day, California domestic violence service providers served 5,413 victims of domestic violence, received 1,748 hotline contacts, and educated 896 people about domestic violence.

Without an allocation of \$260 million in one time funding from the state, programs say they may have to scale back essential services: cutting shelter beds, limiting helpline hours so they can no longer provide 24/7 crisis support, and cutting the service providers who conduct forensic examinations in the wake of sexual violence, among other areas.

A common refrain from the rally was, “California cannot balance the budget on the backs of survivors. Lives are on the line.” The California VOCA Alliance calls on the Governor and California legislature to level fund crime victim services by providing [\\$260 million](#) in one-time funding in this year’s final budget to protect survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence and the organizations that support them.

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About ValorUS®:

ValorUS® (VALOR) is a California-based, national anti-violence organization and California’s sexual assault coalition committed to advancing equity and ending sexual violence. Since our founding in 1980, we have continued to build dynamic relationships across a diverse range of communities, institutions and systems, and mobilize our network of survivors and advocates to influence change. Through leadership, prevention, and advocacy, we are fearlessly pursuing a world free from violence where the dignity of every person is valued and respected. For more information, visit valor.us.

About the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence:

The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (the Partnership) works to prevent and end domestic violence in California by mobilizing over 1,000 survivors, advocates, organizations, and allies. Via public policy, prevention, communications, and community-based strategic engagement, we strive to build healthy relationships at all levels by eliminating the injustices which perpetuate cycles of violence, elevating and expanding opportunities for innovative solutions that center survivors, and building and funding support for local programs.