



Peggy Rotundo
Senator, District 21

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony supporting

LD 2084, "An Act to Provide Funding for Essential Services for Victims of Crimes"

Senator Peggy Rotundo

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Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and other distinguished members of the Committee On Judiciary, my name is Peggy Rotundo and I represent Senate District 21, the City of Lewiston. I am here today to testify in support of LD 2084, "An Act to Provide Funding for Essential Services for Victims of Crimes".

As you know, the federal Victim of Crimes Fund is facing an enormous fiscal cliff in 2025. Due to a reduction in funding, critical services for survivors and victims of crime now must find \$6 million to continue providing essential services to people all over our state.

As Senate Chair of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, I am well aware that the state has no shortage of priorities that need to be funded. In my view, however, a reduction in the funding level for the services that rely on the Victim of Crimes Fund, at a time when demand for many of these services is surging, would be unimaginable.

We can't afford to lose support for victims of child sexual abuse, elder abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault. This money pays for civil legal representation, special advocates for children, and victim services for immigrants and refugees. As a board member of the Coalition to End Domestic Violence, I know the effect these cuts would have on the people in Maine who need the help provided by the Victim of Crimes Fund. Passing this bill will help many Mainers recover from trauma, seek justice and reclaim their lives.

Most of us entered public service for the opportunity to preserve and reinforce the safety net for those who lack resources to seek help on their own. Here is an opportunity to do just that. I support this bill and ask that this committee look upon it favorably. Thank you for considering my testimony, and I will be happy to answer any questions.