

FROM THE GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES

March 4 and March 7, 2022

The Honorable Chair Guy Guzzone
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building,
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Chair Maggie McIntosh
House Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair McCray and Members of the Senate Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee:

Chair Bridges and Members of the House Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee:

FY23 Response to Department of Legislative Services Budget Recommendations:

The Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services plans, promotes, and funds efforts with government entities, nonprofit organizations, and community organizations to advance public policy, enhance public safety, increase child well-being, and serve victims of crime in Maryland.

The Office was established in 1995 when the Governor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission and the Governor’s Office of Justice Administration were merged together to create a singular office responsible for administering federal and state criminal justice funding.

Since the start of the Hogan Administration, the Office has awarded over \$1 billion dollars in grant funding. Our Office has transformed into a multidisciplinary team of grant administration, law enforcement coordination, statistical analysis, children and youth services outreach, and victim services support.

The Office works closely with a multidisciplinary team of state and local entities to on five objectives:

- (1) Develop criminal justice strategies that are coordinated at the local, state, and federal level;
- (2) Improve victim services for Maryland residents;

- (3) Utilize a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to increase child well-being
- (4) Maximize the public safety returns on Maryland's corrections spending;
- (5) And increase the availability of data-driven approaches to criminal justice in Maryland;

The duties and responsibilities of the Office have increased substantially over the past five years. In addition to being the State administering agency for state and federal criminal justice grants, the Office oversees the Victim Services Unit which is made up of both the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund and the Sexual Assault Reimbursement Unit, the Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network, the Children and Youth Division, the Maryland Statistical Analysis Center, and is the repository for nearly sixty legislative reports each year. Our Office is currently managing nearly 800 active grants, totaling \$232 million in combined federal and state funds, including approximately \$74,592,937 in funding to 112 law enforcement agencies throughout Maryland under the State Aid for Police Protection Program (SAPP).

Recommendations:

- (1) DLS recommends that the budget committees add a section to the budget bill restricting funds in each of the data contributing agencies pending the submission of the 2022 out-of-home placements report.**

The Office respectfully disagrees with the recommendation to restrict funding. Any withholding of general funds would affect the continuity of operations as a State Administering Agency. The Office and Children's Cabinet is committed to compiling and submitting this report on time. This report requires significant interagency collaboration to compile the required information. The Office looks forward to working together with the other child-serving agencies to produce this useful information that can inform policy making decisions for youth that require out-of-home placements.

- (2) DLS recommends adding budget language restructuring the enhanced SAPP funding to better target jurisdictions facing higher instances of reported crime. *(provided that \$45,878,173 of this appropriation made for the purpose of State Aid for Police Protection funding made for the purpose of supporting the Administration's Re-Fund the Police Initiative and increasing funding for the counties and Baltimore City may only be distributed in a manner that allocates funds proportionally based on the number of reported total offenses in the 2020 Maryland Uniform Crime Report. Funds not expended for this restricted purpose may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall revert to the General Fund.)***

The Office respectfully disagrees with this recommendation. The State Aid for Police Protection (SAPP) Fund is a statutorily formula-driven funding program used to supplement resources for police protection in our local communities. State funds provide additional revenue to support the operational costs of local and county police agencies. The enhanced funding should be available to all qualifying agencies, not those with higher crime statistics as it creates an inequitable distribution of funds. All police agencies have been affected by last year's Police Reform Legislations. For example:

HOUSE BILL 670

- Implement Victim's Rights Advocate and Misconduct Database
- Annual Implicit Bias Training
- Biannual Mental Health Screening

SENATE BILL 71

- Body Worn Cameras
- Early Intervention System
- Employee Assistance Program
- De Escalation Training

Additionally our office makes funding available in a coordinated effort with programmatic strategies to jurisdictions across Maryland that face higher instances of reported crime such as:

- The Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network (MCIN), a statewide initiative consisting of 14 coalitions with more than 140 partners, working together to break down jurisdictional barriers, enabling law enforcement and prosecutors to target entire criminal enterprises and violent offenders. Since inception law enforcement partners have disrupted or dismantled over 1400 criminal organizations and seized over \$21million in illegal narcotics and assets.
- Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIPPP) supports effective violence reduction strategies, specifically gun violence, through evidence-based and/or evidence-informed health programs. Under Governor Hogan almost 50k individuals have been served.
- This year, the Public Resources Organizing to End Crime Together (PROTECT) Program will maximize the use of State, local, and community resources to combat neighborhood decline in the City of Baltimore and throughout the State. Coordinators will be partnering with local law enforcement to support comprehensive strategies to reduce crime and fear in 10 high crime micro-zones across the State.

- (3) DLS recommends that \$100,000 in general funds be withheld until the office returns to reporting the following grant management MFR measures in its annual submission: the percentage of grants in a regular status; the percentage of grants in risk status audited; the percentage of closed grants with above average compliance with conditions and regulations of grants; the percentage of unused federal funds returned; and the percentage of unused State funds returned.**

The Office respectfully disagrees with this recommendation in regards to the withheld funding. The percentage of grants in a regular status, the percentage of grants in risk status audited, and the percent of closed grants with above average compliance were removed from our MFR last year and are no longer tracked. The percentage of grants in risk status audited was modified to the number of audits completed. The percentage of unused federal and unused state funds returned are in the MFR and we have percentages for those in FY 2021 and will continue to track those in future MFRs to monitor progress over time.

- (4) With its submission of its Report on Proposed Victims of Crime Act Grant Awards and Report on VOCA Funding, Expenditures, and Continuity of Service, GOCPYVS substantially provided the information requested in the fiscal 2022 budget language. DLS therefore recommends the release of withheld funds.**

The Office respectfully agrees with the recommendation.

- (5) As VOCA funding and expenditures remain of great importance to victims of crime in Maryland, DLS recommends adding budget language restricting funds pending the submission of a report detailing the expenditures of the four most recently closed VOCA funding cycles, VOCA grant awards as of January 1, 2022, how changes in the level of funding impacts the continuity of VOCA services in Maryland, and a comparison of the legislative appropriation and actual VOCA expenditures for the most recent six State fiscal years.**

The Office respectfully agrees with this recommendation in part and disagrees in part.

We agree that full transparency is essential in regards to the allocation and spending of federal Victims of Crime funding. GOCPYVS takes no issue with the reporting requirements, however we disagree with the recommendation of \$250,000 of the general fund appropriation not being expended, until the agency submits the requested report. Cumulative withholding of general funds would affect the continuity of operations as a State Administering Agency. The timeline of reporting and method of reporting suggested in the DLS budget language is not conducive to a

timely and accurate submission of this information. We recommend that this report be due March 1, 2023 through a visual dashboard format containing the requested information. We would also encourage the committee to explore more expeditious methods of delivery like a visual dashboard for future legislative reports (including VOCA), due to our office's currently mandated amount of more than 60 legislative reports. The Office has also received interest from members of the legislature in the idea of transferring some of these reports to visual dashboards.

(6) DLS recommends the addition of committee narrative to require GOCPYVS to submit a one-year update detailing its implementation or further response to OPEGA's recommendations and detailing any associated expenditures.

The Office respectfully agrees with the recommendation.

Updates

(1) GOCPYVS should comment on the status of the Project Bounce Back initiative and the extent to which the programming and fiscal resources carry forward into fiscal 2023.

Of the \$25,000,000 total in program funding for Project Bounceback, GOCPYVS is only responsible for administering \$15,000,000; the remaining \$10,000,000 falls under MSDE. Any eligible remaining funding will carry forward into FY23.

The Office has awarded a total of \$12,000,000 to the Boys & Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore, Inc. for Project Bounce Back. The Boys & Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore, Inc. serves as the administrative and fiscal hub for the Maryland Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs.

Through Project Bounce Back, Clubs are coordinating a growth strategy to reach every County in the State. Progress to date includes (since 7/1/2021):

- 4,013 youth served
- 61 active sites
- 13 new sites as a result of Project Bounce Back
- 33 sites in discussion phase

Self-evaluation of programs conducted by the Boys & Girls Clubs have demonstrated that:

- Maryland Club members report they feel safer at the Club than other places
- Maryland Club members feel at least 2 Club adults would be there for them in a crisis
- Maryland Club members feel there is a staff member who believes they will be a success

Through Project Bounce Back, a coordinated state-wide approach, Clubs are:

- Incorporating a lens of understanding of trauma into all programs.
- Promoting the recognition of signs and symptoms of trauma and stress among youth.
- Integrating and sharing knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.

Sincerely,



Yesim Karaman

Chief of Staff

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

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