



State of Rhode Island  
Office of the General Treasurer

**James A. Diossa**  
General Treasurer

12 March 2026

The Honorable Carol McEntee  
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

**RE:** *2026-H 7649 – An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Uniform Act on Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking*

Chair McEntee:

I write in support of 2026-H 7649, which will help fund the Crime Victim Compensation Program (the “CVCP” of the “program”) through fines imposed on businesses failing to comply with a state law that requires certain public and private employers conspicuously display human trafficking hotline information.

Administered by the Office of the General Treasurer, the CVCP provides direct cash assistance to innocent victims of crime in Rhode Island. Program funds can be used to cover funeral expenses, physical relocation, crime scene clean-up, pecuniary losses to dependents of a deceased victim (such as lost wages), and/or expenses incurred as a result of physical injury or death (such as medical bills or mental health treatment). Over the past five years, the CVCP has helped thousands of individuals across our state.

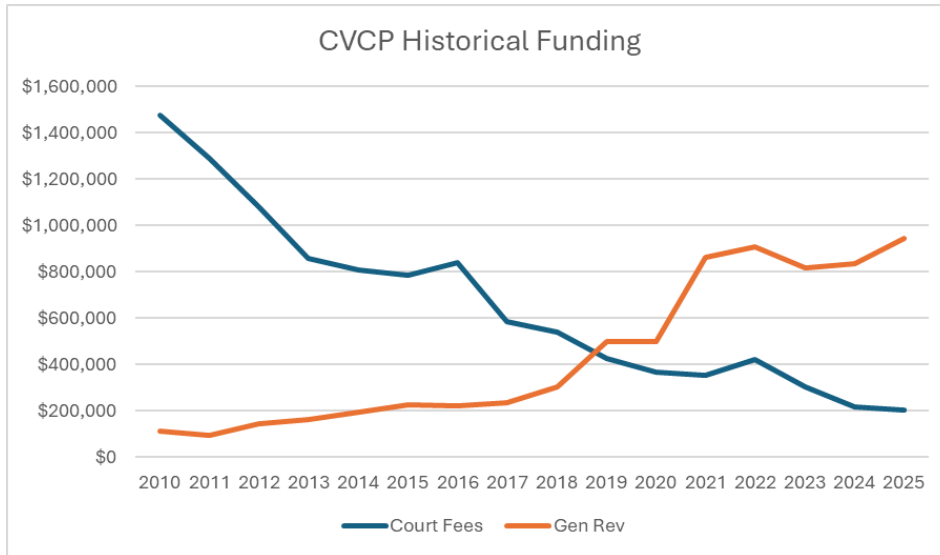
Traditionally, the CVCP is funded by grants under the federal Victims of Crime Act (the “VOCA”) and from in-state court fines and fees, criminal restitution, and court orders on any criminal charged with a felony, misdemeanor, or petty misdemeanor in Rhode Island. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws § 12-25-28. **Through the VOCA, the federal government provides a 75% match of all expenditures made by the state in the preceding fiscal year.**

But over the past decade, resources for this crucial lifeline have steadily declined. **Specifically, program funds generated by court fines and fees have decreased by over \$1.2 million since 2010.**<sup>1</sup> As a result, there has been a corresponding decrease in federal funding and, inevitably, program expenditures. This funding shortfall is an unintended consequence of well-needed

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<sup>1</sup> For context, the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2027 Recommended Budget proposes \$1,649,346 in total funding to the CVCP. The overall CVCP budget has declined significantly over the last 15 years. The FY2011 revised budget appropriated \$2,444,147 for program expenditures.

reforms to the criminal justice system. Legislation like the Justice Reinvestment Act – for example – lowered criminal penalties and resulted in fewer offenders receiving judicial punishment, both of which have the secondary effect of reducing fines and fees coming into the program.



**Figure 1.**

Since 2010, CVCP funding from court fines and fees has undergone a dramatic decline, necessitating increased reliance on general revenue to fund victim support systems.

**This is a significant loss both to the victims and to the state. Not only are victims receiving less, but the state is not realizing the full benefit of available federal resources.** The decline in state funding underscores the need for reliable funding mechanisms that will supplement court fines and fees and help the state provide meaningful financial assistance to crime victims and their families.

While Treasury encourages compliance with public postings intended to boost awareness of human trafficking, this legislation would provide a small but meaningful boost that would help Treasury continue to support victims.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or to my Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs, Robert Craven, Jr., at [Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov](mailto:Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov).

Respectfully,

James A. Diossa  
General Treasurer

cc: The Honorable Matthew Dawson