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 Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
 Shomrei Emanah Congregation
 Suburban Orthodox Congregation
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 Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 148 - Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)

Appropriations Committee

March 21, 2023

SUPPORT

Background: Senate Bill 148 (SB148) would supplement federal funding for victim services programs when the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding fluctuates so that programs would not suffer major budget shortfalls. In each fiscal year the Governor would be required to include an appropriation that, together with the Federal VOCA funding, amounts to \$60 million for victim services programs. This supplemental funding would be housed in the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and its agencies. Through the agency CHANA, the Jewish response to abuse, trauma and neglect, people of all ages can receive crisis intervention, legal services and counseling on sexual, domestic, mental and financial abuse. Like many other crisis response organizations, CHANA relies in-part on federal VOCA dollars to fund its services. VOCA funding has recently drastically decreased, and while a federal fix was signed into law, it will take several years for the federal dollars to catch up. Further, the federal FY23 funding bill shows another cut to VOCA funding, around \$30 million less than funding five years ago.

SB148 provides much needed financial stability for victim service organizations to continue to serve their clients. **For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB148.**

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

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