



2024 PARTICIPANT PACKET



Georgia
Commission on
Family
Violence




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GCADV

GNESEA
Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault



STAND WITH SURVIVORS

ANNUAL ADVOCACY DAYS

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STAND WITH SURVIVORS

ANNUAL ADVOCACY DAYS

Welcome to Stand With Survivors Days!

Dear Advocates,

This year marks the 23rd year Georgia advocates have convened from across the state to connect with legislators about issues impacting survivors of domestic and sexual violence. When we seriously address violence in our communities, our communities are healthy, and when our communities are healthy the people thrive. We all deserve thriving communities.

Sadly, however, in 2022, more than 193 Georgians lost their lives to domestic violence. They were grandmothers, bystanders, teenagers and infants. They join with the 1,527 other members of our human family taken too soon over the last ten years. For those who survive, the numbers of victims being served by shelters, community-based programs and sexual assault centers continue to rise, while victim service programs are facing unprecedented deficits in federal funding. The impacts of these deficits are far-reaching and extend directly into our communities. Our advocacy efforts are vital to ensuring that lawmakers understand the impact these titanic losses could have on the lives of our neighbors, co-workers and loved ones.

We gather together this year to engage the political process and ask our lawmakers to ensure that domestic violence programs and sexual assault centers, as well as culturally specific community-based programs are adequately funded so that victims of violence anywhere in the state can receive life-saving services. We are also asking lawmakers to support legislation that makes it safer for survivors to be in their homes and that the language of laws protecting victims of dating violence is consistent in our statute making it possible for those who are granted protective orders to seek remedies when those orders are violated.

Thank you for raising your voice to help lawmakers find solutions to the persistent problems impacting the safety and stability of survivors.

Thank you for your advocacy!

2024 Stand With Survivors Day Steering Committee

Karimah, April, Jennifer, Gouri, Vanessa





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The Schedule

Advocacy 101 Feb. 6th 10:00am-12:00pm

All SWSD participants are strongly encouraged to attend Advocacy 101. This one and a half hour training session will cover the basics of the legislative process in Georgia as well as an overview of all of the legislative issues you will discuss with your legislators.

Stand With Survivor Day Kick-off Event Feb. 7th 9:00am-10:30am

Come show your love for survivors at this pep-rally style event. The kick-off will feature a review of key issues and inspiration from amazing survivors and supportive legislators designed to motivate you to get involved and effect change in our state.

08:30am - Breakfast

09:00am - Kickoff

10:45am - Group Picture on Capitol Steps

11:00am - Head to the Capitol to meet with Legislators

Why is Advocacy So Important?

Voices United For Change.

Advocates like you play an important role in directly influencing the creation and amendment of laws that address the issues of intimate partner and sexual violence. Your voice in the legislative process provides a platform to educate policymakers and shape policies that address the challenges faced by survivors. It can transform statistics into human stories, motivating legislators to champion impactful policy changes.

Today, we are advocating for legislation that provides safety and stability for survivors and their families by preventing future abuse. By lifting our voices both individually and collectively as people united for change, we send a message that these issues deserve to be prioritized as we work towards a community that is safe to live in for everyone.





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The Wins

For the past 23 years, advocates just like you have convened at the Capitol to be a voice for change, and you have been heard! Some of our most recent wins in our effort to improve the lives of survivors of domestic and sexual violence in the state of GA include:

2023

In partnership with the GA Coalition for Paid Leave, we were successful in removing the Sunset on the Family Care Act which allows workers who already receive paid sick leave to use some of that leave to care for a sick family member.

\$6.4M from the State Legislature was also added to the FY23 supplemental budget for state certified domestic violence shelters and \$13.2M additional ARPA funds added to the FY24 supplemental budget for all victim services.

In addition, (SB131) Provides for judicial discretion in determining the rights of a surviving parent to the custody of a child when the surviving parent has been criminally charged with the murder or manslaughter of the other parent.

2022

The lookback period for a Dating Violence TPO was extended from 6 months to one year.

2021

Advocates were instrumental in passing (HB231) the Dating Violence TPO bill which allows victims of dating violence to seek a TPO. That same year, victims of stalking were added to the lease bifurcation legislation.

2020

Lawmakers passed the Predominant Aggressor Act which clarifies the family violence statute and will reduce the likelihood of wrongful victim arrests.

2019

The Georgia Dignity Act (HB345) was passed which prevents shackling and restraint of women who are in their second or third trimester of pregnancy which was an important development because between 74%-90% of women who are incarcerated have experienced intimate partner or sexual violence. That same year, (HB228) raised the minimum age for marriage from 16 to 17 and (HB282) added requirements pertaining to Sexual assault evidence preservation.

2018

Advocates played a key role in the success of (HB834) which allows survivors to terminate a residential lease after 30 days of written notice without penalty when experiencing domestic violence. That same year, (HB834) was passed which allows courts to delay dismissals of temporary protective orders if the abuser was avoiding service to delay a hearing.

2017

Protections for victims of domestic violence were streamlined in (HB279) so they no longer had to publish their request for name change in the local newspaper.





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Event Follow Up Instructions

We hope that you have a fantastic experience during Stand With Survivors Days.

Your advocacy on these important legislative issues is critical to improving the lives of victims of intimate partner and sexual violence in the state of GA. We want to give you a BIG THANK YOU! You are a changemaker and Georgia will be a safer place where all can thrive, due to your efforts.

Before this year's event comes to a close, we need to hear from you. Feedback on your conversations with your legislators helps us to better strategize beyond Stand With Survivors Days as we continue to move the legislative priorities over the finish line.

In that vein, we ask that you complete a short feedback form about your legislative advocacy immediately or shortly after your meeting while the information is fresh in your mind.

YOU CAN ACCESS THE FEEDBACK FORM HERE 

The digital form is set up to collect your feedback about your success with setting up meetings, as well as which legislators you met with and which policy issues were discussed. We also ask that you share any feedback from your legislator including any concerns they shared. Additional fields have also been provided on the form to collect your feedback on the Stand With Survivors Day event in general. Thank you again for your advocacy! We hope to see you at next year's event!

Legislative Meetings

While our lawmakers are busy introducing and voting on bills typically participants are able to send a message to their lawmakers through the Pages who run in and out of chamber to give the notes to the respective legislator. We encourage you to let your lawmakers know that you will be at the Capitol on the 7th and that you would like to schedule a short meeting with them.

If you aren't able to make it to Stand With Survivors Day, you can still reach out to your legislator and request a short zoom or phone call.

Scheduling a meeting with your legislator may feel intimidating if you have never done so before, but your lawmakers want to hear from you and having face to face meetings is one of the best ways to share your concerns and to ensure that the issues that are most important to you are being heard. There are a few things that you can do ahead of time to improve your advocacy experience.



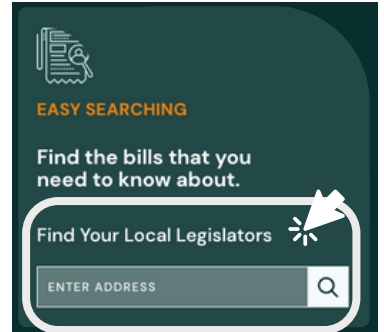


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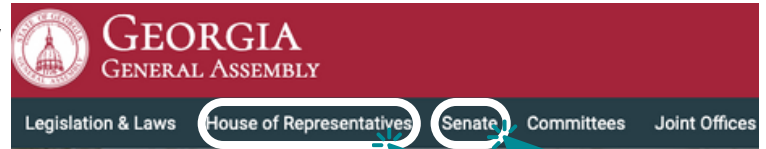
Making Your Legislative Appointment

1. Find who your lawmakers are by going to www.pluralpolicy.com and scrolling down on the webpage and plug in your address. We are only focused on our State legislators, not our members of Congress.



**YOU CAN START YOUR ADVOCACY TODAY.
REACH OUT TO YOUR LEGISLATORS
STARTING NOW!**

Once you have found out who your state legislators are, you can email their staffers at www.legis.ga.gov



For the House of Representatives

Once you click the House of Representatives tab, click "All Representatives" and you will be able to scroll down to find your legislator. We recommend that you email both the legislator and their staffer to let them know you are interested in meeting with them.

For Senators

Once you click the "Senate" tab, then click "All Senators" and scroll down to find your legislator. When you click on your legislator, click the tab under "Constituent Services" and fill out the request form.

On this page you can find out which committees your legislators sit on, the bills they sponsored and how they voted on bills in the past. You will also see their bios which will tell you a little bit about them including their professions, affiliations and relevant social media posts. We recommend calling their office to set an appointment with the admin. If you send an email, indicate in the subject line of the email that you are a constituent who would like to meet with them.

Pro Tip: It is a good idea to use what you learn about your legislator to help you strategize how you will talk about the issues with your lawmaker. Do you have things in common with them? Same school? Same church? Same civic interests?

3. Familiarize yourself with the Issues. Remember the meeting will likely not last more than a few minutes. You are the expert on the issue and are advocating for solutions that are related to your life and work. You do not need to have everything you need to say ready when you schedule the appointment. When you speak with your legislators you will have fact sheets and talking points to reference. You will also have a one pager with QR codes to leave behind. The QR codes will take them to an electronic version of the talking points you have in your participant packet for each legislative priority.

Pro tip: Even if you do not have all the answers to questions you may be asked, remember there is a team of people available to help you find the answers. And don't forget to use the "Questions Legislators May ask" for responses to common questions. It is ok to say, "I don't know, but I will find the answer and get right back to you". **Don't forget to follow up with them with the answer!**





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Making Your Legislative Appointment (continued)

4. If you have not been able to schedule a meeting with your legislators before Feb. 7th, you can meet with them on the ropes outside of the House of Representative and Senate Chambers. You will give the clerk your name and tell them the legislator you would like to meet with. They will in turn give that information to the Page affiliated with that legislator who will take the note into the chamber. If the legislator is present on that day, they will step outside of the chamber and meet with you. This may take some time if they are voting on bills, so please be patient.

Sample Phone Call to Schedule a Meeting With Your Legislator

Good [morning or afternoon], my name is [Insert your name here] and I am reaching out as a constituent (or person who works with constituents) of [insert Sen. or Rep.name here] to schedule a meeting to discuss some of the important issues impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence. I will be down at the Capitol with other advocates Feb.7th and will only need a few minutes of their time. Thank you.

Sample Email to Schedule a Meeting With Your Legislator

Email subject Heading:

Constituent (or person who works with your constituents) requesting meeting to discuss victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Good [Morning or Afternoon],

My name is [insert your name here] and I am reaching out to you today as a [constituent of or person who works with constituents] of [Insert senator or representative name here].

I am participating in Stand With Survivors Day Feb. 7th with advocates from around the state to meet with our legislators about some of the important issues impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence this year. I would like to have 10 minutes with you to discuss why these issues are important to me. I am happy to meet face to face, by phone or on zoom according to your availability.

Thank you for your time,

[Insert your name]

What To Do If You Were Not Able To Schedule An Appointment

Please refer to the sample letter below and send the letter in an email to your legislators. We recommend that you edit the sample letter template and personalize it to your situation and/or the survivors you work with. If you plan to attend Stand With Survivors Day in-person you can try meeting with your legislators on the ropes outside of the Senate and House of Representatives' Chambers.





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Sample Letter to Legislators

Dear [Insert Name of Senator or Representative],

My name is [Insert Your name here] and I am reaching out to you today as a constituent [or person who works with your constituents]. This week I am joining many other advocates from around the state for Stand With Survivors Days where we are reaching out to our legislators about some of the most pressing issues impacting victims of intimate partner and sexual violence.

As a survivor [and/or professional in the field, or family or friend of a victim or survivor], I am keenly aware of the pervasive nature of violence in our communities. Sadly, in 2022 more than 193 Georgians lost their lives to domestic violence. One in four women and one in seven men experience severe intimate partner violence, sexual assault or stalking each year. Children bear the biggest brunt of violence in our communities. One in four children are exposed to domestic violence and 90% of children exposed to domestic violence are eyewitnesses to that violence. Witnessing domestic violence as a child is an adverse childhood experience (ACE) impacting the long-term psychological, physical, and intellectual development of the child. Children who grow up with domestic violence in the home are physically abused or neglected at a rate of 1500 times higher than the national average. The impact of this violence extends into the larger community diminishing public safety, increasing health care costs, and reducing worker productivity.

I know that the safety of our communities is important to you. I am asking for your support of legislation that ensures domestic violence programs and sexual assault centers are adequately funded so that victims of violence anywhere in the state can receive life-saving services. I am asking for your support of legislation that makes it safer for victims to be in their homes; and that the language of laws protecting victims is consistent in our statute making it possible for victims who seek protective orders to seek remedies when those orders are violated.

Will you STAND WITH SURVIVORS and let me know that I can count on your support?

I am happy to discuss why these issues are important to me and talk about the work we are doing in your community to address intimate partner and sexual violence. You may reach me at [provide your contact information].

Thank you,

(Your name here)

Sample Thank You Letter

Dear [Insert Name of senator or representative],

Thank you for taking the time to meet and discuss the legislative priorities for Stand With Survivors Day. Your support of our legislative priorities has the potential to save lives and decrease the incidences of future violence. Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence is vital in strengthening the safety of our communities.

(If appropriate, add personal experience here of anything that came up in the meeting).

Thank you for Standing With Survivors.

Sincerely, [Insert your name here]

Need Assistance? Have Questions?

If you need assistance or have questions, please contact the event sponsors at swsinfo@gcadv.org. Your event sponsors include the GA Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the GA Commission on Family Violence, the GA Network to End Sexual Assault, Raksha and Tahirih Justice Centers.





DIRECTIONS TO THE CAPITOL



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General Directions:

Central Presbyterian Church is located at 201 Washington Street SW, Atlanta, GA 30303, across the street from the state Capitol at the corner of Washington Street and MLK, Jr. Drive. If you are driving, consider carpooling with others as parking near the Capitol will be limited. Parking lots within walking distance of the church include the Underground Atlanta parking deck at the corner of MLK, Jr. Drive and Pryor Street and a cash-only lot next to the church near the corner of Washington Street and MLK, Jr. Drive.

Directions if using MARTA:

The easiest way to get to Stand with Survivors Day is to take MARTA to the Georgia State University Station on the East-West line. There are MARTA stations at the ends of the North-South and East-West lines at which you can park and ride MARTA in to avoid downtown Atlanta traffic altogether.

From the Georgia State University MARTA Station:

Exit the train station in the Sloppy Floyd building which is across the street from the Capitol. From the station, exit towards Piedmont Ave SE. Go left out of the station on Piedmont Ave SE, walking towards MLK Jr. Dr. SE. Take a right onto MLK Jr. Dr. SE. The Capitol will be on your left. Continue on MLK Jr. Dr. SE for one block and take a left on Washington St. SW. Central Presbyterian Church will be on your right. The Taylor Conference Room will be further up Washington Street SW, just off the courtyard of the church.

From the Five Points MARTA Station:

Exit the MARTA Station and take a right on Peachtree Street. Continue on Peachtree St. and take a left on MLK Jr. Dr. SW. Walk 3 blocks until you get to the intersection of MLK Jr. Dr. SE and Washington St. Central Presbyterian Church will be on your right. The Taylor Conference Room will be further up Washington St. SW, just off the courtyard of the church.

There is free daily parking at the following MARTA stations:

- North lines- Lindbergh, Medical Center, Sandy Springs, North Springs.
- Northeast lines- Doraville, Chamblee, Brookhaven-Oglethorpe, and Lenox
- East & West lines- Vine city, Ashby, Westlake and Hamilton E Holmes, Inman Park, Edgewood
- Candler Park, East Lake, Avondale, Kensington, and Indian Creek
- South lines- West End, Oakland City, Lakewood/Fort McPherson, East Point, and College Park





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Driving directions are as follows:

- **Traveling southbound** on I-85/I-75, take exit 248A (MLK/State Capitol/Stadium). Stay in the right lane off the exit ramp. The lane will yield to the right onto Butler Street. Park in the Butler Street parking deck which is the second (2nd) entrance on your right or, if full, the Grady parking lot is down the street on the right. If that lot has already filled, parking is available at Underground Atlanta at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Central Avenue.
- **Traveling northbound** on I-85/I-75, take exit 246 (Central Avenue/Fulton Street). Follow the sign to Fulton Street and turn left onto Butler Street. Park in the Butler Street parking deck which is the second (2nd) entrance on your right or, if full, the Grady parking lot is down the street on the right. If that lot has already filled, parking is available at Underground Atlanta at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Central Avenue.
- **Traveling westbound** on I-20, take exit 58A (Capitol Avenue). Turn right on Capitol Avenue. The Capitol will be approximately one mile down on the left. Turn left on Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SE. Central Presbyterian will be one block down on the corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SE and Washington Street SW. Continue on Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SE for Underground Atlanta parking at the intersection of Central Avenue.
- **Traveling eastbound** on I-20, take exit 56B (Windsor St./Spring St./Stadium). At the third light, turn left onto Central Avenue. Turn left on Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SE and continue to parking for Underground Atlanta at the intersection of Central Avenue.



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Central Presbyterian Church



**GEORGIA BUILDING
AUTHORITY
STATE GOVERNMENT
COMPLEX**

**CAPITOL HILL
Public Parking Map**

Public Parking

- Capitol Parking Lot (Capitol Ave/Memorial Drive)
- Memorial Parking Lot (Capitol Ave/Memorial Drive)
- Pete Hackney Parking Deck (Jesse Hill Jr Drive)
- Steve Polk Plaza Parking Lot (MLK Jr Drive)





ISSUE FACT SHEETS

Stop Kicking the Can Down the Road Fund Victim Services Now!



October 1st of This Year

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Centers are facing a \$44M funding deficit needed to provide direct life-saving services to victims.

The Federal Government has yet to adequately address the VOCA funding crisis and by Oct. 1st of this year, GA is facing a total cumulative loss of 77% of VOCA funding.

VOCA funding comprises on average nearly half of domestic violence and sexual assault program budgets. Without a solution to the VOCA crisis some programs may have to close their doors.

Supplemental funds from the Governor and the State Legislature have been helpful in providing temporary assistance to victim services. But without sustained support from the state, **125,000** victims across GA could be turned away from receiving services and **750** Advocates could lose their jobs - particularly in rural communities.

We have kicked the can down the road just about as far as it can go without a real solution. Ensure that victims anywhere in the state can receive consistent, life-saving services from trained advocates who provide direct care to adult and children victims of violence.

Support SB83- Stalking in the Home

What is SB83?

SB83 revises the definition of stalking to include stalking that occurs in one's residence.

How Does it Work?

SB83 aims to provide a pathway for safety for victims who have been stalked even when they share a residence with their stalker by allowing victims to file for a temporary protective order.

Who Benefits?

Stalking increases the risk of intimate partner homicide by 3x. The vast majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know. 85% of attempted and 76% of completed intimate partner femicides were preceded by stalking in the prior year.

Keep Georgians Safe!

Support SB83- Stalking in the Home



FIX THE CRIMINAL LAW TO INCLUDE VIOLATION OF DATING VIOLENCE TPO

HB231 intended to extend the same misdemeanor offense for courts to address the violation of a dating violence protective order.

Without this fix, abusers are technically free to violate dating violence protective orders without consequence, essentially nullifying the landmark protections of HB231.

This small, but significant fix would give survivors the ability to seek justice when a dating violence order of protection has been violated.

House Bill (HB) 231 was enacted in 2021 empowering courts to issue protective orders for victims of dating violence in the state of GA for the first time.

However, if a Dating Violence TPO is violated, the courts currently have no way to enforce a penalty for violating the order.

The legislative intent of HB231 was to leverage the well-established enforcement mechanism for family violence protective order violations.

**Fulfill The Full Intent of HB231
By Supporting A Small Fix
To O.C.G.A. § 16-5-85**

Support SB324

A VICTIM-CENTERED ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

SURVIVORS OF CRIMES, INCLUDING:

- HUMAN TRAFFICKING (O.C.G.A § 16-5-46)
- DOMESTIC/ FAMILY VIOLENCE (O.C.G.A. § 19-13-1)
- DATING VIOLENCE (O.C.G.A. §19-13A-1)
- SEXUAL ASSAULT (O.C.G.A. § 16-6-5.1)/ RAPE (O.C.G.A. § 16-6-1)
- STALKING (O.C.G.A. §16-5-90 & §16-5-91)



WHAT DOES IT DO?

AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY PLAN, AN ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM (ACP) PROVIDES SURVIVORS WHO HAVE RECENTLY RELOCATED WITH A SUBSTITUTE ADDRESS AND MAIL FORWARDING SERVICE TO USE IN PLACE OF A PHYSICAL ADDRESS BECAUSE THEY FEAR FUTURE HARM.

FORTY-TWO (42) STATES CURRENTLY HAVE ACP PROGRAMS IN EFFECT. Last year, Tennessee, Kentucky, Rhode Island and Utah expanded their Address Confidentiality Programs from voter protection only to full-service programs.



WHAT INFORMATION IS PROTECTED?

MOTIVATED ABUSERS AND STALKERS CAN EASILY ACCESS PUBLIC GOVERNMENT RECORDS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH VARIOUS WEBSITES TO FIND VICTIMS' NEW ADDRESSES AND CONTACT INFORMATION.

RECORDS CREATED BY GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS ENTITIES AFTER RELOCATION ALLOW SURVIVORS TO USE SUBSTITUTE ACP ADDRESSES.

Including but not limited to: Drivers License records, Property records, School enrollment and library cards.

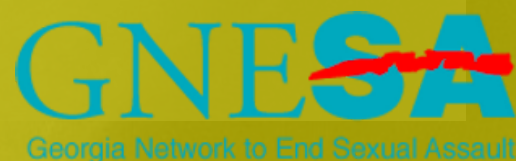


HOW DOES MAIL FORWARDING WORK?

ALL FIRST-CLASS, LEGAL AND CERTIFIED MAIL ADDRESSED TO THE PARTICIPANT IS SECURELY HANDLED AND FORWARDED TO THE PARTICIPANT'S CONFIDENTIAL ADDRESS IN GEORGIA. THESE SERVICES ARE TYPICALLY HOUSED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE OR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.



Georgia
Commission on
Family
Violence





ISSUE TALKING POINTS



STAND WITH SURVIVORS

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Issue Talking Points

Funding For Domestic Violence Programs and Sexual Assault Centers

1. Starting October 1st of this year, GA's domestic violence programs and sexual assault centers will be facing a \$44.5M deficit in federal victims of crime funding.
2. On average nearly half of GA's domestic violence and sexual assault program budgets consist of VOCA dollars. **Without sustained support from the State, some small, rural programs have said they may have to close their doors.**
3. Without funding to fill the gaps left by VOCA, **CJCC projects that 125,000 victims across the state will be turned away from receiving services.**
4. GA has experienced a cumulative loss of 77% of federal victims of crime funding steadily since 2018. Due to these increases, in FFY22, Domestic violence shelters and community-based **programs have already had to deny more than 33,000 services to victims due to lack of capacity, and if federal dollars are not replaced, tens of thousands more services will be denied to victims in GA.**
5. Program staff are already seeing an uptick in crisis-oriented services such as emergency shelter, crisis hotline calls, and court accompaniment and are devoting more time and resources per survivor to assist in securing housing and employment that are often essential steps to leaving emergency shelter.
6. **With the titanic decreases in the federal victims of crime fund which funds VOCA, CJCC projects that 750 of these direct service positions will be lost without a long-term solution- particularly in rural communities.**
7. Like many other programs around the country, GA's domestic violence and sexual assault programs have been successful in securing state, local and private donor funding including \$6.4M in supplemental funding from the General Assembly in the amended FY23 budget and additional \$13.2M in ARPA funds from Gov. Kemp.
However, these supplemental funds have a shelf life and are due to expire in October of this year. These are not long-term solutions and are simply not enough to protect against decreases of this magnitude.





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Issue Talking Points (continued)

SB83 Revise the Definition of Stalking to Include Stalking that Occurs in the Home

1. SB83 aims to give a pathway for safety for victims who share a residence with their stalker, to get a Temporary Protective Order.
2. When someone surveils, stalks, or harasses another person living in the same residence, it can make it difficult for the person being stalked and surveilled to leave. **Currently, GA's stalking statute only covers stalking which occurs outside of the home.**
The vast majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know: 40% by a current/former intimate partner, 42% by an acquaintance. **Persons who stalk in the home often use technology – i.e. installing cameras in areas where there is meant to be a reasonable expectation of privacy.**
4. **Stalking increases the risk of intimate partner homicide by 3x. 76% of women who were victims of intimate partner fatalities experienced stalking prior to their death.**
5. Victims of stalking often experience fear, extreme stress – worrying about what is going to happen next or if the stalking will end.
6. Living with high levels of stress can also have an impact on worker productivity including disturbed sleep, poor concentration, work performance. **Some victims have lost their jobs as a result, while others change careers or leave their workplace.**

Fix the Law to Include Violation of a Dating Violence TPO

1. A small yet significant fix is needed to enact enforcement provisions for dating violence protective orders. House Bill (HB) 231 was enacted in 2021 to empower courts to issue protective orders for victims of dating violence in the state of Georgia for the first time. In doing so, the legislative intent was to **simultaneously** create a criminal penalty using the **already-existing enforcement mechanism** for family violence protective orders. O.C.G.A. § 16-5-95 makes it a misdemeanor offense to violate the terms of a family violence protective order.
2. When HB231 was introduced, the definition of a “civil family violence order” was not amended to include the newly-created Chapter 13A dealing with dating violence protective orders. Thus, Georgia courts technically have **NO criminal enforcement mechanism for dating violence protective order violations.**
3. To fix the oversight, O.C.G.A. § 16-5-95(a)(1) must be amended with language that explicitly incorporates and makes clear the possible legal consequences for violating protective orders under the dating violence code section.
4. This change may seem small, but the practical effect of this legislative omission on victims of dating violence cannot be understated. Leaving courts without an enforcement mechanism could allow abusers to freely violate the terms of a dating violence protective order without consequence, effectively nullifying the landmark protections legislators afforded to victims when they enacted HB 231.





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Issue Talking Points (continued)

SB83 Revise the Definition of Stalking to Include Stalking that Occurs in the Home

1. **42 states have full address confidentiality programs** including a substitute mailing address and a mail forwarding service. Six states including: Georgia, *Alaska, Arkansas, Alabama, Wyoming, North Dakota, have confidentiality programs that protect victims' addresses from voter rolls only. **Last year Tennessee, Rhode Island, Utah and Kentucky expanded their address confidentiality programs from voter protection only to full-service programs.**
2. **Over the past three years,** domestic violence shelters and community based domestic violence programs in GA have **helped 6,979 victims specifically with relocation assistance.** 1,621 victims in 2023 alone.
3. Records created by government and business entities after relocation allow survivors to use substitute addresses including:
 - Home, deed and private business records
 - State ID and Driver's License
 - Motor Vehicle Title/Registration
 - School Enrollment Records
 - Professional Licenses
 - Library Cards
 - State and Social Benefits
4. To be eligible for participation in the GA Address Confidentiality program one would need to be a victim of domestic, dating, sexual violence, stalking or trafficking; move to a new residence, and affirm that the disclosure of their physical address would increase the risk that they could be threatened or harmed and a letter from a victim service provider certifying that said individual is receiving services related to their victimization.
5. Once the victim has been certified as a participant they **will receive an address confidentiality card with a unique identification number and a designated, substitute physical address.**
6. The National Association of Address Confidentiality Programs' 2022 report collected data from 30 address confidentiality programs:
 - In 2022, 44,314 people were enrolled in the National Association of Address Confidentiality member programs. **The average per state was 1,018. Newer states had lower averages.**
 - NACAP members have served a total of 128,951 individuals since the beginning of their programs. **In 2022, the lifetime average per state was 5,922.**
7. When a participant presents their address confidentiality card to a government entity, the **government shall only use the participant's designated address for public records. The office of the Secretary of State will forward all first class, registered or certified mail to the participant's confidential address.**





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Additional Bills We Are Following

Bills Regarding Immigration

HB194 "Undocumented Persons family Violence Protection Act; enact."

Bills that impact immigration policies on victims

Legislation that will improve the lives of immigrant survivors.

Easing reporting requirements for immigrant victims (particularly students on college campuses) who choose to access abortions but do not want to engage with law enforcement.

Landlord Legislation

HB304 "Uniform residential Landlord and Tenant Act; enact.

HB404 "Safe at Home Act; enact.

Among other renter protections, this bill prohibits landlords from charging more than 3x the rent.

Firearm Legislation

HB44 "Brady Law Regulations; require universal background checks in all manner of firearm transfers and purchases."

HB135 "Crimes an offense; establish offense of failure to adequately secure a firearm."

HB875 "Firearms; persons convicted of family violence offenses cannot possess or purchase; provide."

SB119 "Crimes and Offenses; persons convicted of misdemeanor crimes of family violence from receiving, possessing, or transporting a firearm; prohibit."

Menstrual Products

HB123 "Sales and use of tax; certain menstrual products; create exemption."

SB51 "Sales and use taxes; sale or use of certain menstrual products; exempt."

HIV Testing

A bill that would shorten the requirement for HIV testing for a person indicted for sexual assault to 48 hours so that all grantees can get the 5% of funds currently withheld because GA's requirement is not congruent with Federal law.

Miscellaneous

SB335 "Safeguarding Adopted Children from Sexual Violence Act"

HB508 "Crimes and Offenses; orders be served on a respondent within 24 hours of the court 'issuance of such order; provide."

HB382 "Evidence; privilege for participation in victim centered programs; provide."

HB565 "Social services; temporary assistance for needy families; increase access to benefits."

HB357 "Domestic relations; process for individuals to change surname to birth certificate surname; provide."





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Questions Legislators Might Ask

During your visits with your legislators, they may ask some questions you may not have the answers to. It is okay to say, "I don't know, but I can get that information for you". Some questions may be specifically about our legislative priorities. Some common ones may be:

Q: Does this bill require funding?

A: SB324- The Victim-Centered Address Confidentiality bill carries a fiscal note. The funds for this program go through the Secretary of state's Office to cover the cost of managing the program, generating participation cards, the mail forwarding service and training advocates to provide application assistance.

Q: Funding? Don't we give ya'll extra funds every year?

A: CJCC just submitted a report to the Legislature which paints a picture of how underfunded programs have been since the state standards were passed in 1989. We have never had adequate funds to meet the needs of victims and the number of people turned away each year keeps increasing.

Q: Have we ever tried something like this before?.

A: If talking about SB324-Address Confidentiality: Yes, we currently have the VoteSafe program that is run out of the Secretary of State's Office but it only protects victims' addresses from voter records and does not include a mail forwarding service.

A: If talking about SB83- Revising the definition of stalking- No, we currently do not have a definition of stalking that includes stalking in one's residence.

A. If talking about the Dating Violence TPO fix: No, this was an oversight when HB231 was initially passed in 2021. This would fix the oversight.

Q: Do you know what folks in my district think about this?

A: Speak from your own experience



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Questions Legislators Might Ask (continued)

Where is this bill currently?

A: SB83 is in the Senate Judiciary Committee and SB324 is in the Senate Children & Families Committee. Funding is an ongoing discussion in the Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate and the Dating Violence TPO Fix is under review.

How can I help?

A: Please share your concerns about funding with your colleagues and talk about the impact in your community. The bills that have been introduced need to be heard and voted on in committee. Please speak with your colleagues about the bills and encourage them to vote.

Q: Can you send me information about this legislation?

A: Please leave the One Pager with QR codes with your legislators.

Do you know how many people this affects?

A: Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault, so in effect, this affects everyone in the community either directly or indirectly as bystanders, family members, co-workers and friends.

Q. Do you have data about this situation you can send me?

A: Explain that you do not have specific data right now but if you have an anecdotal example of your own or someone else's experience please share it. You can also offer to get the information from GCADV's Policy Director, Karimah Dillard (kdillard@gcadv.org) and send it to them directly. If you promise to follow up with them, please follow up!