

Subject Funding for crime victim services

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Overview

The federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984 established a crime victims fund that consists of fines and penalties from convictions in federal cases. The federal government distributes money from the account to states to support organizations providing services to victims of crime.

The amount of money in the fund has varied widely since its inception. In 2000, the federal government placed a cap on the amount of money available for distribution every year. The amount available for distribution peaked in 2018 at \$3.85 billion. It decreased to \$1.8 billion in 2023 and \$1.2 billion in 2024.

This bill would create a Minnesota victims of crime account that would consist of transfers from the general fund, revenue from an increase to marriage license fees, a penalty assessment on corporations convicted of crimes, and a penalty assessment on all defendants who commit certain other crimes. Money in the account would be available for grants to organizations providing programs for victims of crime.

Summary

Section	Description
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| 1 | <p>Minnesota victims of crime account.</p> <p>Establishes the Minnesota victims of crime account in the special revenue fund. Provides that the account consists of money deposited into the account and any interest or earnings of the account. Appropriates money in the account to the commissioner of public safety to make grants to programs that provide services to victims of crime. Requires an annual report regarding money deposited into the account.</p> |
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Section	Description
2	<p>Terms of license; fee; premarital education.</p> <p>Increases civil marriage license fees by \$10. The fee increases from \$115 to \$125 or, if the parties qualify for a reduced fee after taking premarital education, from \$40 to \$50.</p>
3	<p>Disposition of license fee.</p> <p>Requires that \$10 from each marriage license fee be deposited in the Minnesota victims of crime account in the special revenue fund.</p>
4	<p>Corporate offenders; penalty assessment required.</p> <p>Requires a corporation sentenced for a criminal offense to pay an assessment in addition to any fine imposed by the court. The assessment is up to \$1,000,000 for felony offenses, \$250,000 for gross misdemeanors, and \$100,000 for misdemeanors. The court must impose an assessment of at least 30% of the maximum unless the defendant makes a showing of undue hardship. Identifies the factors a court must consider when determining the amount of an assessment. Requires any money collected to be deposited in the Minnesota victims of crime account.</p>
5	<p>Victim services assessment.</p> <p>Requires a person sentenced for certain criminal offenses to pay an assessment in addition to any fine imposed by the court. The assessment must be between \$500 and \$750 for a misdemeanor conviction and \$750 to \$1,000 for any other offense. Requires a waiver of the requirement for defendants who are indigent and authorizes a waiver for defendants who make a showing of hardship. Requires any money collected to be deposited in the Minnesota victims of crime account.</p>
6	<p>General fund transfer.</p> <p>Transfers an unspecified amount in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 from the general fund to the Minnesota victims of crime account.</p>



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