

**COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AND SEXUAL ASSAULT
(CDVSA)**

Host Location:

Prince William Sound Science Center
1000 Orca Road
Cordova, Alaska

**CDVSA Quarterly Council Board Meeting
Annual Rural Outreach Meeting in Cordova, Alaska
FY 2023 Quarter 4
June 8 – 9, 2023**

June 8, 2023

Board Members Present:

Angela Garay, Chair
Bell Blaze, Vice Chair
Lydia Heyward
Ryon Turley
Laurel Shoop
Steve Williams
Commissioner Kim Kovol
Commissioner James Cockrell
Commissioner Jennifer Winkelman
Deputy Attorney General John Skidmore

Guests:

Polly Koutchak	Natalie Wojcik – SAFV Sitka
Christine Pate – ANDVSA	Ezra Bennet – WAVFE
Rowena Palomar – AAV	Nicole Songer – CFRC
Karla Carlson – IAC	Keeley Olson – STAR Anchorage
Suzi Pearson – AWAIC	Ronnie Leach – SPHH
Rebecca Shields – Kodiak WIC	Brenda Stanfill – ANDVSA
Mandy Cole – AWARE Juneau	Tiffany Mills – H.O.P.E. Craig

Staff:

Diane Casto, Executive Director
Catherine Mohn
Chris Hardin
Ella Nierra
Kay Riley
Marybeth Gagnon
Meggie Stogner
Lisa Morley

Minutes prepared by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Angela Garay called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was established.

AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Angela Garay called for a review of the meeting agenda. John Skidmore **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Steve Williams. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

CONFLICT INQUIRY

Steve Williams stated that he will recuse himself from the FY 24 award allocation discussion and action as he has a Trustee that works for one of the organizations. No other conflicts of interest were declared.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND CDVSA STAFF

Angela Garay welcomed attendees to the meeting and opened the floor for introductions.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Pam Smith, a Tribal Council member of the Native Village of Eyak, joined the meeting to share a land acknowledgment.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Angela Garay directed the members' attention to the draft March 2023 meeting minutes. John Skidmore **MOVED** to approve the FY 23 Quarter 4 meeting minutes, **SECONDED** by Steve Williams. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the agenda. She noted that the two-day meeting would include a shortened business meeting to allow more time to hear and visit with the Cordova subgrantee and other partners. She explained the tight timeline on day two and noted that being timely with airport transfers is essential.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, April – June 2023

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the executive director's report included in the board packet and highlighted the following information:

Staffing and Personnel:

- CDVSA has nine full-time positions filled and two positions vacant.
- Lisa Morley began as the new program coordinator II on April 10, 2023.
- On April 28, 2023, Ann Rausch retired from the Council. CDVSA received approval for an updated job description for the prevention program coordinator and planned to begin recruiting for a new prevention expert the week of May 30.
- The Council is again recruiting for a new administrative officer II. The position was initially posted from March 21 through April 4, 2023. While there were several good applicants, two withdrew their applications. The vacancy was reposted and will close on June 8, 2023.

Diane Casto commended the Council staff for the excellence and passion they apply to the work, and she is grateful to have such a fantastic staff.

CDVSA Funding Challenges:

- CDVSA had three increments included in the Governor's FY24 budget:
 - \$3M (Unrestricted general funds (UGF)) - one-time increment for DVSA Victim Services Grants Support (continuing replacement of federal VOCA funds)
 - \$1.2M (UGF) to increase and enhance community-based prevention and abusive partner intervention program activities
 - \$420,000 (Restorative Justice Account (RJA)) to align authority with the statutory distribution of the balance in the RJA.
- When the legislature gaveled out on May 18, 2023 following a one-day special session, the following three increments remained in the final budget passed by the House and Senate:
 - \$3M one-time UGF and the \$420,000 RJA funding have both been added to the FY24 victim services funding to help balance the gap in victim services funding for FY 24
 - \$1.2M in UGF has not yet been added to CDVSA's FY 24 budget. The Council plans to determine the best use of the funds in FY 24, focusing on prevention (60%) and perpetrator rehabilitation (40%)
 - The Council continues to watch the trend of the four federal formula grants. They have maintained a similar funding level over the past three years.
 - VOCA appears to have stabilized at around \$3.3M.
- CDVSA's level of grant funds in FY25 appears to be approximately \$6,949,648 in federal funding and \$11,628,583 in state general funds for a total of \$18.5M, leaving the Council short roughly \$3.5M to remain at the current level of grant funding.

CDVSA Priority Projects Updates

FY 24 – 26 Competitive RFP and PEC Process

- CDVSA staff was busy working through the process of receiving grant applications for CDVSA's two competitive Request for Proposals (RFP), Enhanced Services and Victim Services.
- A portion of the funding available for Victim Services depends on the approval of the FY 24 budget and the \$3M one-time GF increment. Additionally, the Council will use the \$420,000 RJA increment received in the FY24 approved budget.
- On May 3, 2023, agencies recommended for Enhanced Services (ES) funding received an e-mail indicating the recommended amount of their FY24 award. These were sent for planning purposes with the caveat that nothing is final until the CDVSA board reviews and approves all FY24 funding recommendations and Governor Dunleavy signs the state's FY24 operating budget.
- A similar e-mail was sent to all agencies recommended for Victim Services (VS) funding indicating a 2% reduction from their FY23 funding level (for current sub-grantees) and a 2% reduction from their requested funding for the two new agencies recommended for funding. The total 2% reduction equaled \$353,951. It was a difficult decision, but with so many unknowns about future CDVSA funding, it was the most prudent decision to make now.

Diane Casto gave a brief overview of the status of other funding streams. She noted that the board packet includes a summary of the FY24 grant funding recommendations and an Excel spreadsheet for each grant funding category.

FY23 Supplemental Funding for Utilities, Gas, and Other Consumable Commodities

- During last year's legislative session and FY23 budget decisions, CDVSA received a \$300,000 UGF increment designated as supplemental funds for the sub-grantees. The intent of the funding was to help with the high cost of utilities, gas, and other consumable commodities.
- In FY 22, the Council provided a similar supplemental to support its programs.
- Using the same formula used in FY22, the distribution will use the state's Geographic Pay Differential (GDP) based on the higher cost of living in different parts of the state.
- Based on a total of \$300,000 available, this year's payments will range from \$8,064 (0% differential) to \$12,903 (60% differential). Two agencies declined the supplemental funding, dividing the \$300,000 among 33 agencies. All payment information has been forwarded to DPS Payables and will be processed next week.

Legislative Session

- There are several legislative bills with a possible impact on CDVSA. Below is a partial list of bills introduced and in various stages of hearings and movement in the legislative process by the end of the first session:
 - HB 11 – An act establishing the crime of assault in the presence of a child
 - May 9, 2023, moved to House Finance Committee
 - SB 12 – An act relating to creating an address confidentiality program
 - Passed the Senate April 26, 2023, referred to House State Affairs
 - SB 28 – An act relating to workplace violence protective orders
 - March 24, 2023, referred to Senate Judiciary
 - HB 67/SB 65 – An act relating to domestic violence/sex offenses
 - Referred to House and Senate Judiciary
 - HB 68/SB 66 – An act relating to sex and human trafficking
 - February 8, 2023, referred to Senate Judiciary; April 28, 2023, referred to House Finance
 - HB 116 – An act relating to appropriations from the restorative justice account
 - May 8, 2023, referred to House Finance
 - HB 119 – An act relating to marijuana taxes (currently funding CDVSA prevention)
 - Read in House Rules Committee and held over in House Labor and Commerce until next January.
- When the second regular session of the 33rd legislature begins next January, these bills will continue to be monitored for their impact on the work of CDVSA.

Improving Services for Those Who Cause Harm

- Lisa Morley, the new program coordinator II, will become familiar with the current BIP/PBP programs, collaborate with the Department of Corrections (DOC), and

continue work with the UAA School of Social Work in the development of a training curriculum on domestic violence directed at behavioral health providers.

- CDVSA sponsored the April symposium “Voice! Acknowledgment! Power! Victims’ Rights & Restorative Justice Symposium” held in Anchorage. The event was hosted by Dr. Ingrid Johnson and Dr. Rei Shimizu from UAA and featured several speakers.
- The Council will continue working in partnership with Drs. Ingrid Johnson and Rei Shimizu on exploring alternative services for working with individuals who cause harm and those who are harmed.

Communications, Outreach, and Media

- Due to limited funding for prevention efforts in the last six years, the Council’s efforts have been focused on the national and state recognition months of February (Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month), April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month), and October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month).
- With the additional FY24 increment for prevention activities, the Council anticipates expanding its reach with more consistent and stable messaging, including new creative and targeted themes.

BUDGET REVIEW/FISCAL REPORT

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the financial report and budget and highlighted the following information current June 1, 2023:

- Page 1 – Program Budget FY 2023
 - Total budget authority, \$33,861,817
 - State funding authority total, \$19,985,517
 - Federal funding authority, \$13,876,300
 - Total operating budget, \$4,652,500
 - Total program budget, \$21,356,258
 - Total budgeted obligations, \$26,008,758
- Page 2 – Grants Awarded FY 2023
 - Total grant award authority, \$28,662,007
 - Total awarded to programs, \$21,377,665
- Page 3 – Detailed Sub-Award Plan for FY 2023
 - Total amount allocated for sub-awards, \$21,377,665
 - Total amount awarded to subgrantees, \$21,377,665
- Page 4 – Contracts and Services FY 2023
 - Total authority for contracts and services, \$2,887,000
 - Total of contracts and services obligations, \$1,240,989
- Page 5 – FY 2023 Remaining Balances
 - Total remaining balance across all appropriations, \$8,427,340.

Diane Casto noted that because of the ongoing vacancy of a financial administrator, adjustments had to be made to correct the allocation numbers. Diane thanked the Department for their expertise in preparing the CDVSA financial statements.

RECOMMENDED FY 24 GRANT AWARD ALLOCATIONS

Diane Casto directed the members' attention to the documents titled:

- *CDVSA SY 21 – 25 Grant Funding (All Grant Types)*
- *Overview and Justification for CDVSA FY24 Grant Funding*

- *FY24 Funding Recommendations*
- *CDVSA Funded Programs Acronyms*

Diane Casto reported that CDVSA issued two competitive Request for Proposals, one for the Enhanced Services Grant Program and one for the Community-Based Victim Services Grant Program. The three other grant programs, Prevention, Battering Intervention, and Prison-Based BIPs are continuation grants for FY24.

She highlighted the following information:

Enhanced Services (ES) for Victims of Crime Grant Program

- Enhanced Services (ES) for Victims of Crime Grant Program provides funding to community, municipal, or tribal organizations to provide services that enhance existing services in three specific areas:
 - Legal assistance services for victims of crime.
 - Mental health counseling for children/youth (through 18 years of age) who are direct victims of abuse or have witnessed a violent crime.
 - Child Advocacy Center Services (CACs) for the purpose of serving child/youth victims of sexual or physical abuse.
 - Grant funds are restricted to direct service personnel costs only.
- The RFP was released on February 21, 2023, with applications due to CDVSA by April 3, 2023. CDVSA held one Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) for the ES applications on April 20, 2023.
- Sixteen proposals were received, and one program did not meet the intent of funding to enhance an existing program.
- A total of \$3,169,244 was requested, and only \$2,542,572 was available for distribution.

Community-Based Victim Services Grant Program

- Community-Based Victim Services Grant Program provides immediate safety and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their dependent children in life-threatening situations and strengthens local community responses to these and other crimes.
- Community-based victim services are funded using multiple state and federal funding streams. Most expenditures are allowable, including personnel, travel, facility rental, services, commodities, equipment, and other needs to provide comprehensive direct victim services.
- RFP was released on March 6, 2023, with applications due to CDVSA by April 18, 2023. Due to the large number of proposals received, CDVSA held two PECs, splitting the number of applications between the PECs. The first PEC was held May 9-10, 2023, and the second PEC was held May 11-12, 2023. A total of 27 proposals were received and reviewed. All programs that applied were recommended for funding.
- A total of \$20,273,901 was requested, and only \$17,343,637 was available for distribution.

Continuing Grant Programs

- Continuing grant programs will be funded at the same level as received in SFY 2023.

- The grant program funding recommendations are for continuation funding for 13 prevention subgrantees and six BIP/PBP subgrantees.

VAWA/STOP Funding

- Two agencies receive grants from this federal award based on the required allocations for victim services:
 - ANDVSA will receive \$209,648, and Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center (AKNWRC) will receive \$25,000 for a cultural set-aside.
 - In addition, AKNWRC will receive \$75,000 in GF for a total grant award of \$100,000.
- The recommendations are based on the required STOP victim services/cultural set-aside funding amount and are not negotiable.

Diane Casto answered clarifying questions from the board members and answered John Skidmore’s questions about the processes for writing the RFPs and selecting PEC members. She noted that recommendations made and approved by the board would not be final or implemented until Governor Dunleavy signs the FY24 budget.

FY 24 Allocations:

John Skidmore **MOVED** to accept recommendations for enhanced services, prevention, BIP/PBP, and STOP Grant allocations for the Network and the cultural set-asides, excluding victim services, **SECONDED** by James Cockrell. John Skidmore clarified that he excluded victim services to discuss the victim services separately. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion **PASSED. (8/0/1)**

In the discussion related to victim services, John Skidmore remarked that he has concerns with cuts to existing programs. He recognizes that there is more money than what was allocated in FY23 but not enough funding to meet all of the requests for FY24. He suggested funding all programs at the FY23 levels and distributing to the two new programs, My House and RurAL CAP, the remaining funds of \$553,164.

John Skidmore **MOVED** to reallocate the same funding amount to FY24 as FY23 and take the difference to fund My House and RurAL CAP, **SECONDED** by James Cockrell and Jennifer Winkelman. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion **PASSED. (8/0/1)**

John Skidmore remarked that when he looks at where the statistics for domestic violence and sexual assault are most significant, they tend to be higher in rural Alaska (specifically in the Y/K Delta) than in the Valley. The Valley has one program in AFS, and adding My House would give further funding to the Valley. Hooper Bay has a higher need because it’s in rural Alaska, where fewer resources are available.

For purposes of discussion, John Skidmore **MOVED** to fund RurAL CAP (Hooper Bay) at the request of \$250,028 and to fund the request for My House (Wasilla) at \$303,136, **SECONDED** by Blaze Bell. Following is the discussion in summary:

- James Cockrell agreed with the logic related to need in rural Alaska.
- Jennifer Winkelman communicated that rural Alaska definitely has a greater need. Still, she was thinking that there is a process for which people apply, and for My House and RurAL CAP, the board should be looking at their PEC score for how the funding would be allocated.

- John Skidmore said that although he lacked a clear understanding of the RFP and the PEC committee selection processes, he didn't see people on the committee that he felt had some experience in rural Alaska. He has worked and lived in rural Alaska. As the deputy attorney general where he oversees 13 offices statewide, and having sat on the Council for the past decade, his perspective is that there needs to be a greater emphasis on rural Alaska. He is not confident that the RFP appropriately actuated that. As a member of the Council, that's what he thinks is most appropriate as a policy matter.
- John Skidmore added that while he appreciates the PEC score, it is not his controlling factor. The controlling factor for him is the mission of the Council and what the data says of where the greater need is.
- Angela Garay agreed with the rural perspective, but also considers the need to reach out to populations that may be underserved, not just in rural areas but also in urban communities. She noted that one of the underserved populations is victims that are underaged and homeless because of violence.
- Angela Garay added that she understands My House serves a population that would not traditionally go to a women's shelter. They are victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse within their homes that need a safe place to be.

There were no amendments to the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion **PASSED. (8/0/1).**

Angela Garay commented that she would like to invite My House to speak to the board at a future meeting to learn more about their program. There is a need for the board to expand beyond what is the stereotypical victim. When looking at victims of sexual abuse in the home or relationships, young people and people with non-traditional lifestyles would often be uncomfortable in existing shelters. She advised the board to stop limiting whom the Council serves during discussions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public comment period was offered, and a full transcript was prepared.

PREPARATION FOR CORDOVA COMMUNITY DIALOGUE **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS TO CORDOVA FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (CFRC)**

Nicole Songer and Yaritza Mejias joined the meeting and shared a CFRC direct service presentation. She shared the following information:

History of Cordova Family Resource Center:

- It started as a volunteer organization in a small space with a landline and desk during the Valdez oil spill. Due to the increase in family violence, alcoholism, added financial stressors, and suicide, community members joined together to address the changes.
- In 1993, CFRC became a formalized non-profit mainly focused on domestic violence/sexual assault but also had Denali KidCare, some OCS clients, but primarily direct services.
- In 2002, Nicole Songer became executive director.

- In 2004, CFRC expanded and began addressing the issues and teaching children how to have healthy relationships and boundaries and talk to their peers or parents.

Nicole Songer reported that Cordova has approximately 2,500 year-round residents, and in summer, mainly due to tourism and the fishing industry, the population doubles to about 5,000 people. Nicole shared fact sheets with the board that covered the number of direct service provisions, helpline/text line contacts, direct services to DVSA clients, Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) referrals, community resource referrals, shelter nights, and behavioral health case management collaborations. She reported that direct services include the following:

- Legal advocacy
- SART response
- Safety planning
- Information and referral
- Court accompaniment
- Medical accompaniment
- Law enforcement accompaniment
- Mental health referrals and accompaniment
- Food
- Shelter
- OCS supervised visitations
- Parenting classes
- DART response
- Language interpreter
- Immigration
- Public and state assistance referrals and applications
- Housing applications
- Restraining orders/other legal orders
- Food donations and contributions for troopers/forest service

Nicole Songer reported that it is important to CFRC to make their office comfortable versus clinical. She highlighted a wall where they encourage kind words and shared that signage is presented in multiple languages.

Nicole Songer reported that CFRC takes advantage of various trainings and hosts a variety of community events, including:

- Participation in Domestic Violence Awareness Month activities in October
- Participation in community health fairs
- Hosts an annual dinner
- Hosts an Annual Basket Fundraiser
- Hosts a Women’s Craft Night
- CFRC hosts community response focus groups
- CFRC hosts summer outreach in collaboration with the school district to provide meals and healthy activities and host two summer camps

Nicole Songer spoke about the meat donations they receive from law enforcement, the Forest Service, and Fish & Game. They contact CFRC when there’s an opportunity to get fish or meat to process and donate to individuals with food needs.

Nicole Songer reported that during COVID, CFRC experienced a temporary office closure (one week), programming was postponed, and CFRC procured safety gear before reopening.

Kelley Hartlieb with UAA Center for Human Development (CHD) joined the meeting and shared that their mission is to help improve the quality of life and access to society for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She shared the following information related to Disability Abuse Response Teams (DART) Project:

- Overview of abuse against people with disabilities:
 - One in four people in the U.S. has a disability of some kind.
 - People with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience rates of victimization at far higher rates than people without disabilities.
 - People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have many layers of trauma, including co-occurring disabilities and/or a part of other unrepresented populations of victims.
 - Sexual assault and domestic violence against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are grossly underreported and under-prosecuted.
 - The 2020 Alaska Victims Survey included a response from people who identified in one or more categories that would qualify them as a Trust beneficiary, and it revealed that over 50 percent of the people who responded identified in terms of one or more of the categories.

Nicole Songer reported that there had been advances in rights for people with disabilities and awareness about disabilities. It's been slow, but there is a growing understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities thanks to self-advocates and the disabilities rights movement. She said that disability services, victim services, legal, and law enforcement are often siloed, resulting in gaps in the system as well as training deficits.

Nicole Songer reported that CFRC is one of the DVSA agencies participating in the Disability Assault Response Team (DART) Project. She highlighted the following information:

- DARTs are coordinated community responses to violence and sexual violence against people with disabilities. The purpose of DARTs is to bridge the victim advocacy and disability service systems. DARTs work to increase accessible, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed services for people with disabilities across multiple networks.
- DART is a multi-disciplinary group aiding people who experience disabilities and have been victims of domestic violence/sexual assault.
- Multiple small-scale studies exist about domestic violence against individuals with disabilities in the United States. Studies report that nearly 40% of women with disabilities report being victims of domestic violence, a percentage far higher than the general population.
- For individuals with disabilities, significant barriers to reporting exist, including fear of losing a caregiver, inability to verbally communicate due to a disability, and fear of not being taken seriously, among others.
- The Cordova Family Resource Center and Independent Living Center, with support from the Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, work together and are committed to helping anyone who experiences disabilities and who are victims of interpersonal violence.

Nicole Songer reported that there are seven active DARTs in Alaska. Active DARTs are asked to contract with UAA CHD to carry out the following activities:

- Contract setup:
 - Approve the scope of work, with or without modifications; describe the contract process; plan and turn in a schedule of trainings; collect signatures from the leadership of at least five core partners on a community MOU.
- Onsite technical assistance:
 - Coordinate 1-2 days of onsite technical assistance training about DART with agency leadership and at least 50% of staff.
- Performance indicator:
 - Complete an Accessibility Performance Indicator with the DART Project Director.
- Training coordination:
 - Coordinate at least two one-hour trainings with the DART project director about disability and domestic violence/sexual assault topics for core partners.
- Individual calls:
 - Participate in four technical assistance video calls one-on-one with the DART project director throughout the year.
- Statewide calls:
 - Participate in two technical assistance video calls with other DARTs statewide.
- Information sharing:
 - Provide contact information to the DART project director to document DART community membership.
- Dissemination:
 - Create a DART dissemination product specific to the community, like a brochure, social media page, website page, flier, business card, logo, sticker, and more.

Nicole Songer shared the following information related to the DART ECHO Series:

- ECHO stands for Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes.
- The ECHO Series are virtual learning communities that provide educators, service providers, case managers, administrators, families, and others access to expert advice from professionals throughout the state and country, building capacity in home communities to implement best practices and improve outcomes.
- Community participants learn from each other, and specialists learn from community participants as best practices emerge.
- The mentoring from specialists helps equip participants to support individuals and their families with health and disabilities-related needs in their home communities.
- DART ECHO goals:
 - To remove barriers and increase the capacity to serve survivors with disabilities effectively
 - To build a statewide learning and resource-sharing community.
- DART ECHO Series happens once a month. DARTs statewide meet to discuss their experiences and challenges.

Nicole Songer reported that looking ahead, they plan to focus on accessible materials and agency websites, piloting a brain injury screening tool specifically for domestic violence and sexual assault providers, and expanding DART into new regions of the state.

RECESS

Recess was not recorded.

DRAFT

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Minutes prepared by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

CFRC TOUR

Council members attended a site visit to CFRC.

COMMENTS AND CLOSING REMARKS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

No record of comments and closing remarks from board members.

ADJOURNMENT

No record of adjournment.

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PUBLIC COMMENT
Thursday, June 8, 2023
11:00 a.m.

ROUGH DRAFT TRANSCRIPT
Pages 1 - 28, inclusive

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Lisa Morley

Reported by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 ANGELA GARAY: Let's move forward with
3 public comment. We've got hands up, and then we'll
4 move to the people in the room after we take people
5 online.

6 People online, we are waiting for Kay to
7 catch up.

8 DIANE CASTO: And can I clarify, too, we
9 have 30 minutes for public comment.

10 ANGELA GARAY: Well, we have quite a few
11 hands.

12 KAY RAVERT: Let's start with Polly.

13 ANGELA GARAY: Yes, she was the first
14 one there. Okay. Ms. Koutchak, if you would like to
15 make your comment.

16 POLLY KOUTCHAK: Hi, Madam Chair.
17 Diane, it was just so mysteriously interesting how I
18 had been connected with you over the phone during the
19 Department of Interior hearings. I do recall that
20 connection with you very, very vividly. However, when
21 I was accompanied by Sam from the Interior shelter and
22 organization here in Fairbanks to report my crime that
23 was committed against me by our local dentist, you
24 know, there was the sexual investigator, Matt Iverson,
25 who listened to my legitimate claim of being sexual

1 assaulted by my dentist.

2 And I would like to make a highly,
3 highly legitimate consideration, and this includes the
4 detachments and the sexual investigators. I'm really
5 concerned that there is just once presence of the
6 Alaska State Troopers under DPS that is currently just
7 standing there all by themselves. This is my
8 recommendation, and I say this and recommend it by my
9 lived experience, and I really stress that
10 strenuously, I do. I approach you with various lived
11 experiences.

12 And so we need -- you people need to
13 highly consider having another person that is being
14 paid with these funds. We need to have their
15 responsibilities and their roles to sit beside the
16 sexual investigators when a legitimate claim is being
17 reported, and that's to ensure the safety and the
18 protection of the sexual investigators in their role.
19 And I say this very, very mindfully. And that's my
20 comment.

21 I am a survivor of Catholic church
22 clergy abuse, I've had a horrendously rich life due to
23 that. And I say this because it made me study Polly.
24 I know Polly so well that I am so transparent, it has
25 made me a very compassionate mature elderly Alaska

1 Native woman. I'm very independent.

2 But I truly want, under the direction of
3 Commissioner Cockrell, when these sexual crimes are
4 reported in the urban areas, there must not only be
5 individuals like Matt Iverson here in Fairbanks, but
6 there must also be a female presence that is currently
7 employed in these detachments. It was really, really
8 uncomfortable for me to sit there and I'm reporting
9 this sexual assault by my dentist and that case was
10 closed. It makes me totally indifferent to the
11 efforts. And these decisions that are made that
12 impacts our lives and something has to change. No
13 more words, but acts.

14 And so I do have that legitimate concern
15 that aside from the sexual investigator, there needs
16 to be increased roles and responsibilities of people
17 at these detachments that needs to accompany the
18 victim that is reporting these crimes.

19 And so that is all I have, and I just
20 really want to thank you, Diane, I truly do. And I do
21 this in loving memory of my dear friend who we had
22 touched upon at our initial connection back in April.
23 Thank you, you guys.

24 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you so much for
25 your comments. We will take that under consideration.

1 And I would remind everyone online, we
2 are -- we have a lot of people that have their hands
3 raised, so if you can keep it concise, that would be
4 helpful.

5 KAY RAVERT: There are nine people that
6 I'm counting. Next is Christine Pate.

7 ANGELA GARAY: Ms. Pate, would you like
8 to make your comments?

9 CHRISTINE PATE: Yes. Can you hear me
10 okay?

11 ANGELA GARAY: We can.

12 CHRISTINE PATE: Wonderful. Thank you
13 so much to the Council for this opportunity to speak.
14 My name is Christine Pate, I am the legal program
15 director at the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence
16 and Sexual Assault. What we do is provide civil/legal
17 assistance to survivors of domestic violence and
18 sexual assault statewide. I have been in this role
19 since 1999.

20 We are a VOCA enhanced services grantee
21 since 2020. We have received \$568,000 over the last
22 three years. And we are very grateful for this money
23 since there are not many places where you can receive
24 civil/legal funds. We have been funded pretty much
25 entirely on federal discretionary grants since I've

1 been running this program since 1999. So it was
2 really a gift when this became another grant source.

3 Two things I want to briefly address.
4 The recommendations that were just adopted by the
5 Council are a 12 percent cut to our grant, and I want
6 to talk about the impact that that is going to have
7 for us and our partners. And I also want to address
8 some concerns about the transparency of the criteria
9 as I have seen it through this process.

10 First of all, the impact of a 12 percent
11 cut to us in the next three years. We are a
12 partnership grant. Our \$568,000 does not just fund
13 our program, it funds the Alaska Institute for
14 Justice, it funds the Alaska Native Justice Center,
15 and it funds Alaska Legal Services Corporation. We
16 are a statewide legal services program also.

17 And I appreciate all the comments that
18 Council members made about the importance of funding
19 rural Alaska. I live and work in Sitka, Alaska and
20 have for 30 years. Our program funds attorneys doing
21 work all over the state, including rural Alaska,
22 Prince of Wales, Utqiagvik, and Dutch Harbor.

23 We very intentionally are a cooperative
24 grant with four civil/legal providers. We are a very
25 scarce resource in the state. We want to be

1 efficiently providing referral sources. We don't want
2 to duplicate referral sources, and we want to be
3 serving the most critical victims and underserved
4 victims.

5 To that end, ANDVSA provides civil/legal
6 services statewide in family law cases primarily, but
7 generally civil matters. The Alaska Native Justice
8 Center provides civil/legal services statewide
9 primarily focusing on Alaska Native survivors. The
10 Alaska Institute for Justice pretty much is the only
11 immigration provider in the state providing
12 civil/legal services to immigrant and LEP survivors
13 across the state. And Alaska Legal Services provides
14 services to survivors in non-family law civil/legal
15 services.

16 What is civil/legal services? For those
17 of you who don't know, it is a critical resource for
18 victims to help them to end the violence. Several
19 studies have shown that it could be the most
20 important. That is because it removes the obstacles
21 that people have to ending the violence in their life.
22 It helps them to get safe child custody orders from
23 courts, it helps them to get immigration relief when
24 their abusive partner will not assist with that, and
25 to avoid deportation and separation from their U.S.

1 citizen children. It helps to get housing if they are
2 being evicted for wrongful reasons. It helps with DCC
3 benefits and sometimes helps with assisting in
4 criminal cases if victims need to know more about
5 their rights.

6 We ask for \$568,000, that's flat funding
7 from what we've received over the last three years.
8 We have just been approved for \$500,000, a \$68,000
9 cut. The 2024 iteration of our grant was already a
10 cut, because we had funded three attorneys, 2.5
11 paralegals, and 60 private contract attorneys through
12 our grant. In this iteration, we could only fund 2.98
13 attorneys and 1.58 paralegals because we cannot -- we
14 cannot continue to fund people at the same amount with
15 flat funding.

16 We also fund contract attorneys doing
17 this work statewide, which has been a great, great
18 resource for us through this. The civil/legal world
19 has fewer attorneys who want to do family law. It has
20 people who don't want to do these cases. It took us
21 18 months to hire an attorney doing family law, and
22 contract attorneys allows us to spread this work over
23 several private attorneys.

24 What will be the impact for us? We have
25 spent our money every single quarter every single

1 year. We have served pretty much 230 to 240 clients
2 every quarter over our partnership. We will serve now
3 probably 30 less every quarter with this cut. We will
4 maybe have to do 30 less contracts depending on how we
5 take this cut.

6 We have limited options for other
7 funding. As I said, the civil/legal world does not
8 have a lot of resources for where we can find funding.

9 The second issues, I guess, that I
10 really want to address is the transparency of the cut.
11 If you notice in the asterisk by our name it says that
12 we have been cut because we asked for more than 20
13 percent of the funding, and it was a much larger
14 amount than anybody else asked for. There was no
15 place in the RFP that addressed this, that said you
16 can't get more than 20 percent of the funding. As I
17 said, it's what we previously received, and had we
18 known that, we probably would not have applied as a
19 partnership, which would be a shame, because it would
20 create more paperwork for the Council and four
21 separate grantees, and it would erode our ability to
22 be partnership and avoid duplication of services.

23 So if that is a criteria of this grant
24 in the future, it needs to be in the RFP, because we
25 had no notice of that otherwise.

1 I appreciate your work, I thank you for
2 the ability to comment, and I would ask you to maybe
3 reconsider our grant determination. Thank you.

4 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. Next is Ms.
5 Palomar.

6 ROWENA PALOMAR: Good morning. My name
7 is Rowena Palomar, and I am the executive director of
8 Advocates for Victims of Violence located in Valdez.
9 I would like to make this public comment short and
10 sweet.

11 I would like to thank everyone for
12 approving and bringing back the funding for victim
13 services to the same level as fiscal year '23 and
14 recognizing the critical services that victims and
15 survivors are needing, such as providing a safe place
16 to stay, emergency shelter, and individual advocacy.
17 Our goal is to make victims and survivors be safe.

18 And bringing back the funding at the
19 same level of FY 23, I know it's going to be struggle,
20 but at least that would be one less burden for all the
21 shelters in the state of Alaska. Thank you.

22 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you, Ma'am. Thank
23 you for keeping it concise. Carlson?

24 KARLA CARLSON: Hi. Can you hear me
25 okay?

1 ANGELA GARAY: Yes, we can.

2 KARLA CARLSON: Hi. My name is Karla
3 Carlson, I'm the interim executive director at the
4 Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living. I just
5 wanted to talk briefly about all of the programs in
6 which receive CDVSA funds. My understanding is that
7 there was a \$1.2M allocated by legislators for the
8 Batterers Intervention Programs and prevention
9 programs, and so my organization has been flat funded
10 in both of those.

11 I'll start with BIP and PBP. Those
12 programs are currently operating at a deficit, and
13 it's my understanding that we have been funded at this
14 level for 15 years. Our facility expenses alone is
15 almost 30 percent of my current funding, and the rest
16 of the funding pays for 1.4 staff member, which does
17 not leave me any room for training or professional
18 development. This is a specialized population that
19 requires staff to have specific training and
20 supervision. Our current funds do not allow me to pay
21 staff livable wages, which has been kind of touched on
22 already by the board. I can't hire any of those staff
23 full time. It also does not allow me to double staff
24 this program, which is best practice for group
25 facilitation and for the safety of my staff working

1 with this population.

2 This program cannot continue at its
3 current funding level. It is operating at a deficit,
4 which is pulling money from victim services, which is
5 the core of what our agency does. We are at a point
6 where our board is considering our ability to even
7 continue or if we can operate this program. And so I
8 guess I would urge the board to consider making those
9 funds available to grantees as soon as possible.

10 Moving into prevention, our prevention
11 program has also been flat funded. It does not --
12 it's the same issues with salaries and increased
13 inflation and supplies I need. I need probably about
14 \$100,000 more to operate that program at what we need
15 to do to meet the needs of our community.

16 Moving into victim services, thank you
17 for the consideration of considering flat funding.
18 I'll just echo that with increasing costs of inflation
19 and salaries, in order to increase wages for my staff
20 doing direct service by 6 percent and being more
21 competitive with places like Walmart and fast food and
22 social services that do entry level work, we are short
23 about \$200,000, which is the equivalent of about three
24 full-time advocate positions.

25 So I just wanted to make the board aware

1 of what our current needs are in our programs. And
2 then I'll just -- I wasn't prepared to talk about our
3 legal program today, but we have also -- we also serve
4 a significant number of people through our legal
5 program and have seen significant demand for services
6 and have lost access to some of the funding that we
7 previously had. And also that program is operating at
8 a deficit. Thank you for your time.

9 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you, Ma'am. Suzi
10 P. next.

11 SUZI PEARSON: Hello. Good afternoon --
12 well, good morning still, but I want to thank you very
13 much to the Council board members to allow us to make
14 public comment today.

15 I'm the executive director of Abused
16 Women's Aid in Crisis, Suzi Pearson. AWAIC is the
17 largest emergency shelter in the state with 67 beds.
18 CDVSA funds fully support our emergency shelter and
19 24-hour crisis line and are critical to ensure that
20 services continue to be provided to victims of
21 domestic violence in our community.

22 Using these funds, we provide a 24-hour
23 crisis line, crisis intervention, case management, and
24 even more, both to residential and non-residential
25 participants. We've seen an increase in the number of

1 non-residential participants over the last several
2 years. We've seen a significant increase in victims
3 coming to shelter multiple times in the past year.
4 The duplicated number has increased from 519 this past
5 fiscal year to 764 so far this year. The demand for
6 emergency shelter in Anchorage has significantly
7 increased for those with high lethality situations.

8 Thank you so very much for recommending
9 and approving a budget that will provide flat funding
10 to all continuing victim service programs. However, I
11 would still like to make the board aware of the
12 challenges facing AWAIC over the last several years
13 due to flat funding.

14 Over the last two years, AWAIC has
15 struggled to effectively compete in the job market
16 with our wages and benefits. This year, the AWAIC
17 board of directors, based on the recommendation from
18 management, moved forward with increasing wages to
19 become more competitive despite flat funding from our
20 multiple funding sources. AWAIC is committed to
21 fairly compensating our staff for the critical work
22 they do. Without these increases in salary, we have
23 still seen a 13 percent increase in the cost of
24 personnel compared to last year. With these
25 increases, we will see a greater disparity between FY

1 23 and FY 24.

2 Additionally, because of the cost of
3 personnel, we have not been able to increase staffing
4 commensurate to the number of beds we have. As such,
5 we have had to decrease the availability of providing
6 bed space by at least ten beds to ensure safe staff
7 ratios.

8 There has also been a significant
9 increase in consumables, such as food and household
10 supplies with an increase of 55 percent over last
11 year. We have seen no increase in our funding sources
12 from FY 22 to FY 23 to assist with operational costs
13 of the shelter.

14 I sincerely do appreciate the efforts of
15 the board to provide flat funding continuing, and I
16 would like to encourage CDVSA staff and the board to
17 be more aggressive in their funding requests for FY
18 23 -- I mean, FY 24 in next year's legislative
19 session.

20 Once again, thank you for the
21 opportunity to make public comment today.

22 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you, Ms. Pearson.
23 Ms. Shields, Rebecca Shields?

24 REBECCA SHIELDS: Hello. I hope you can
25 hear me. Thank you so much. My name is Rebecca

1 Shields, and I am the executive director of the Kodiak
2 Women's Resource and Crisis Center, and I will try to
3 keep my comments brief because I hear that so many
4 things that I have to say have already been said.

5 I want to start by just saying thank you
6 for brining us back to flat funding and averting the 2
7 percent cut on this year's funding. As Nicole pointed
8 out, the 2 percent cut really turns into a much
9 broader, deeper cut based on the fact that we've been
10 flat funded for four years.

11 What we do is so specific, and Kodiak is
12 one of the lucky communities that we do have other
13 supporting funding. CDVSA is about 60.5 percent of
14 our funding, but CDVSA, the Council on Domestic
15 Violence and Sexual Assault, is and remains our core
16 funders.

17 Because what we do and what our mission
18 is is so specific. As victim services, we are here to
19 provide safety and keep our eye on safety through the
20 unique lens of domestic violence and sexual assault
21 issues. Doing this work is very complicated and
22 difficult, and I would refer you all back to the
23 document that you know very well, our regulations.
24 Following best practices and being able to provide
25 voluntary services and working with the people who

1 need us most in our community are the victims who are
2 traumatized and come to us with very complex issues
3 asking our staff to deal with this for \$18 an hour
4 when they could go to McDonalds and make that and get
5 a free burger on the side and not have to worry about
6 the things that we're asking them to worry about.

7 We are really asking our people to do
8 very comprehensive work, and the most important part
9 of what we do is provided by people. In the
10 discussion you were having earlier amongst yourselves
11 about the challenges right now that we're all facing
12 is being able to find staff and keep staff and
13 maintain staff.

14 One of the things right now that KWRCC
15 is going to be looking at is that we're not going to
16 be able to provide just cost of living increases for
17 our staff. We are at our limit of what it is we can
18 do to keep people inspired and devoted and able to
19 move forward in this work and do the most important
20 types of work that can be done and needs to have the
21 support. And we look to the Council on Domestic
22 Violence and Sexual Assault to help us maintain that
23 level of best practices that we are required through
24 our regulations to provide and that we most want to
25 provide, because that is the work that we do, and it

1 is the heart of who we are.

2 Thank you for listening, and thanks
3 again for at least bringing us back to flat funding.

4 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. Mandy Cole.

5 MANDY COLE: Hi. Thank you so much for
6 this opportunity. My name is Mandy Cole, I'm the
7 executive director at AWARE in Juneau. Thanks for
8 restoring FY 23 level funding, that certainly helps.

9 But the only piece of my comment that is
10 any different from anyone else's is that I do
11 appreciate the policy level discussion that's going on
12 here. And I think what we all want to avoid, I know
13 what I want to avoid, is just the slow dwindling over
14 time, 2 percent, 4 percent, flat, flat, 2 percent. If
15 we need to make changes in order to continue to
16 provide these services, okay, but we need the
17 resources to be able to do that. We need the
18 resources to be able to make change if you want us to
19 be able to earn revenue with social enterprise or you
20 want us to be able to develop more housing or whatever
21 it is that we are supposed to do in order to earn
22 revenue.

23 We have a history behind us where CDVSA
24 has basically supported the operations of our crisis
25 intervention programming, and if we have to change

1 that, then we need a concerted -- we need direction,
2 facilitation, and some resources to get that off the
3 ground.

4 So that's it, you know, that's the only
5 thing I have to say that's anything different from
6 anyone else other than thank you again for your time
7 and for your thoughts.

8 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. And Natalie,
9 and I'm not sure how to pronounce your last name, so
10 please tell us how to do that.

11 NATALIE WOJCIK: Yeah, it's Natalie
12 Wojcik.

13 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you.

14 NATALIE WOJCIK: Good morning. I'm
15 Natalie Wojcik, and I'm the director of Sitkans
16 Against Family Violence in Sitka. And first, just
17 like everyone else has said, thank you so much for
18 putting us at the same funding level as last fiscal
19 year. However, while we are so grateful, we are still
20 operating at a deficit with flat funding, and I'm just
21 going to describe SAFV's current cost in comparison to
22 previous years.

23 So as seen across the state, the need
24 for victim services for domestic violence and sexual
25 assault are increasing, and our costs are also

1 increasing. A two-bedroom apartment in Sitka is now
2 up to \$3,000 per month, and there's rarely any
3 available. This lack of affordable housing and lack
4 of housing in general is making it nearly impossible
5 to help clients find permanent housing. In one case
6 we had a client at SAFV for up to 1.5 years now, and a
7 lot of them are following behind her. We've had to
8 convert an office and our conference room into
9 bedrooms because of the increase in requests for
10 shelter.

11 This year, due to the increase in
12 clients seeking shelter, we've had the following
13 operating cost increases.

14 This year compared to last fiscal year,
15 utilities are projected to cost over \$3,000 more;
16 internet is projected to be \$1,000 more; hotel went
17 from 1,000 last fiscal year to 2,500 this fiscal year,
18 which is a \$1,500 increase; our utilities went up
19 recently resulting in a \$2,800 utility bill last month
20 compared to \$1,900 in the month prior, and due to the
21 current rate hike, last month's bill was \$800 more
22 than the coldest month of the year.

23 Additionally, health insurance has
24 increased by 10,000 per year, and our starting wage
25 for advocates is less than a dishwasher. My daughter

1 just turned 16 and got a job as a dishwasher making
2 \$20 an hour, so she is making more than our starting
3 wage for advocates.

4 And then due to flat funding, we cannot
5 adequately pay staff to keep up with inflation, nor
6 can we afford to have more than one advocate per
7 shift, which makes it very difficult to provide
8 uninterrupted one-on-one advocacy for clients.

9 So I still want to really, really thank
10 you for flat funding us and making it possible to
11 continue on and for recognizing the needs of
12 survivors, especially those in really rural places
13 within Alaska that have really high rates of violence.
14 Thank you.

15 ANGELA GARAY: I believe the last person
16 online is Keeley Olson.

17 KEELEY OLSON: Thank you for having me.
18 I want to introduce myself. I'm Keeley Olson, I'm the
19 executive director of STAR or Standing Together
20 Against Rape in Anchorage. We are a 24-hour rape
21 crisis center. We also provide prevention and
22 education throughout the state, but also primarily
23 with the Anchorage School District and within
24 Anchorage we have contracts with NOAA, the National
25 Park Service to do sexual harassment prevention and

1 education. We do have diversified funds. We are
2 looking to increase funding from the Municipality of
3 Anchorage, and still we are going to be harmed by
4 funding cuts.

5 So thank you so much for insuring that
6 we are going to have level funding with FY 23. I'm
7 very thankful to the board for recognizing that a cut
8 would have had increasingly damaging repercussions.

9 I am calling you today from Washington,
10 D.C. I was brought here on the dime of the National
11 Network to End Domestic Violence and the National
12 Alliance Against Sexual Violence for the annual
13 advocacy days. I've been on the Hill communicating
14 with our congressional delegates. I was able to meet
15 with staff from Senator Sullivan's and Murkowski's
16 office and met directly with Mary Peltola yesterday
17 advocating for increased funding for the entire state
18 of Alaska based on the issues we face with domestic
19 violence and sexual assault.

20 So we definitely do our part to try to
21 increase the funding that we receive. I was here with
22 another Network employee, Lauree Morton was here with
23 me, and we were both advocating on behalf of increased
24 funding to CDVSA directly to increase funding. And I
25 would very much like to see CDVSA as well requesting

1 additional funding and letting the state know. We do
2 it every year. Every session we are there as programs
3 talking about our needs, but we need CDVSA to also
4 step up and confirm that more funding is necessary, to
5 let the Governor know that more funding is necessary,
6 and keeping us flat funded for five years is a
7 decrement to funding.

8 But thank you so much to the board
9 members who are very astute. We realize that cutting
10 funds to the very necessary programs providing service
11 24 hours a day to victims and survivors, that those
12 are critical services, and we certainly appreciate
13 you. Thank you very much.

14 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. And it looks
15 like there's one more person online but it just show
16 the number 262-815-4066? Can that person identify
17 themselves and make their comment?

18 EVERETT BENNET: My name is Everett
19 Bennet, I'm the executive director for Working Against
20 Violence for Everyone in Petersburg. And I just
21 wanted to point out that I want to echo what everyone
22 has said. And right now I'm actually at the clinic,
23 and one of two staff members in our small program, and
24 so cuts like this really impact programs like us.
25 When one person is out sick, it makes it really

1 difficult to provide services.

2 And so we have also had issues hiring
3 people. We've lost several people because we can't
4 offer health insurance, and it's a big problem for us
5 to not be able to provide those services. So thank
6 you for your time. I appreciate this discussion, and
7 I know you guys have a tough job, so thank you.

8 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. That's the
9 last comment online. Is there anyone present from the
10 public who would like to make a comment here?

11 BRENDA STANFILL: Well, I usually have
12 time on your agenda, but I don't this time because you
13 had a shorter one, so I'll just make a few comments
14 and I'll provide a written report to you later.

15 But you've heard from a lot --

16 ANGELA GARAY: Could you identify
17 yourself for the record?

18 BRENDA STANFILL: Oh, yes. I'm Brenda
19 Stanfill with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence
20 and Sexual Assault. Thank you.

21 ANGELA GARAY: Brenda, you may want to
22 move a little closer. I don't know how well we can
23 year you.

24 BRENDA STANFILL: Okay. But you heard
25 from the programs, and again, I would echo the thank

1 you for getting back to the 100 percent of the flat
2 funding from last year.

3 You know, I really want to point out,
4 I've just kind of been saying this over and over
5 again, you wouldn't need a criminal justice system if
6 we didn't have victims, and yet victim services is the
7 part of the criminal justice system that we never
8 quite are sure is going to be funded.

9 Victim services is a very specialized
10 type of service. It is not a homeless shelter. They
11 provide critical emergency safety from a third party
12 that has already abused that person. They have
13 security systems, they have drills that they have to
14 run, they have code words that they have to be able to
15 say in case they have an intruder alert. And at the
16 same point in time, you know, many of them have been
17 trying to figure out how to get out of \$16 an hour,
18 \$17 bucks an hour, that's how much they have to pay.

19 This is traditionally a lot of women
20 working in this field, so once again, we start looking
21 at equity. Why is it that we're asking them to
22 continue doing this when I doubt very seriously anyone
23 else in the criminal justice system would work for the
24 same wage for five years.

25 I would just ask that we start looking

1 at the policy issue that was brought up earlier. How
2 do we decide how much is to our core services? And
3 when I say "core services," working as a director of a
4 shelter for many years, I did know what my core
5 services were. It was that emergency service coming
6 in the door and the advocacy and support I provided at
7 the time of the trauma, and then everything else I
8 built on that.

9 I would ask that as a group you all
10 think about what is the core services and how much of
11 this funding goes to that, and then how much as we
12 build out. If we're going to fund them into health
13 services, what does that look like? If we're going to
14 fund legal services, what does that look like? And
15 that we really come up with a good plan for the future
16 where we don't run into this, like, how are we doing
17 this and how are we deciding.

18 We are absolutely right and we are never
19 going to solve this issue like funding emergency
20 shelters, because emergency shelters are the ER of the
21 domestic violence programs. And we don't solve any
22 kind of situations by the emergency rooms. Those are
23 the band aid for things have happened.

24 So I totally agree that we have got to
25 get in front of this. There was a lot of discussion

1 this year that I tell you I couldn't really answer the
2 question as to how are we going to end this. I look
3 forward to continuing as the Network working with the
4 Council to come up with a long-term strategic plan and
5 looking at our needs assessment -- we've been working
6 on that as the Network -- and really come with -- that
7 we can say to someone, "For the next 20 years, here's
8 our plan. Here's this year, here's what we are
9 expecting."

10 I know that we have a lot of work in
11 front of us. I think that a lot of things had been
12 brought up this last legislative session and things
13 that let us know that we definitely need to get more
14 organized and how are we going to get the other parts
15 of the system in place for prevention, the
16 accountability. We are working on the safety, but the
17 prevention and the accountability, if we don't start
18 figuring that out, we are not going to solve the issue
19 of domestic violence and sexual assault or even reduce
20 our rates.

21 So thank you for the opportunity to talk
22 to you, and I look forward -- since I'm here in the
23 room, I'll have lot of more opportunities to talk to
24 you all, I know. So thank you.

25 ANGELA GARAY: Anyone else in the room

1 who would like to make public comment?

2 NICOLE SONGER: I just wanted to follow
3 up with thank you for hearing us and giving us levels
4 that we were at the previous year. That is some
5 burden for us, at least we know that, but it's going
6 to be challenging as we move forward just like
7 everyone's position is. And I appreciate you all and
8 appreciate the choices and decisions you have to make,
9 I know they are not easy. Thank you.

10 ANGELA GARAY: Thank you. Anyone else?
11 Last call. Okay. I think we will close public
12 comment and thank everyone for the comments and how
13 much it helps us when we are doing the job we need to
14 do.

15 (End of public comment)

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