

**Concerning the Oversight of Crime Victim Services, and in connection therewith,
creating the Crime Victim Services Advisory Board and Repealing the Victims
Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee and the Victims Assistance and
Law Enforcement Advisory Board**

Senator Newell & Representative Roberts

SB 09-047

What does the Bill do?

The legislation seeks to streamline funding for services to crime victims in Colorado by merging the three existing statewide advisory Boards that make recommendations for this type of funding to the Division of Criminal Justice, including: 1) The Victims Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee (Coordinating Committee); 2) the Stop Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Board; and 3) the State Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (State VALE) Board. These 3 boards would be combined into one board called the Crime Victim Services Advisory Board. The Coordinating Committee currently makes funding recommendations on the federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) grants, the State VALE Board currently makes recommendations for State VALE grant funding, and the VAWA Board currently makes funding recommendations for the federal Violence Against Women grants. The membership and responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee and the State VALE Board are currently defined in statute. The VAWA Board is a non-statutory board.

Why combine the 3 Boards?

Combining the 3 boards and the 3 grant programs would provide a more **user-friendly process** for grantees, **streamline the funding process**, help ensure the **effective use of available grant dollars**, and **reduce board cost expenses**. Grant applicants will be able to apply for grant funds from VOCA, VAWA and State VALE through one application process. In many cases, grantees will be able to reduce the number of reporting requirements they have to submit to the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ). By combining the 3 boards, it will provide a more **efficient grant process** and **reduce administrative duplication** that occurs with 3 different boards.

Section by section highlights of significant changes to statute

►24-4.1-117.3 (1) (2) (3) Creates a new section which outlines the membership, authority, and roles and responsibilities of the new combined board, including amending the standards and sanctions for victim compensation and local victim assistance and law enforcement (VALE) programs, advising the Division of Criminal Justice on State VALE applications, codifying the process for reviewing Victim Rights Act violations, and administering any profits from Colorado's "Compensation from Benefits of Crime" statute (24-4.1.201). It also re-establishes the new Board as a Type 2 Board.

►24-4.1-117.3 (2)(a-e) Establishes certain statutory members of the Board and staggers the initial terms for Board members. As in current statute, reiterates that members of the Board serve without compensation. The Executive Director of the Department of Public Safety, rather than the Governor, would appoint the new board. The new board appointments would be made by August 1, 2009.

►24-4.1-117.3 (3)(e)(I) Re-establishes the Standards Subcommittee and its responsibilities. The Standards Subcommittee is responsible for the development of, amendments to, and compliance with the Standards and Sanctions for Victim Compensation and local VALE programs. This

Subcommittee makes recommendations to the Victim Compensation and Local VALE standards to the new board.

▶24-4.1-117.3 (3)(e)(II) Establishes the Victim Rights Act Subcommittee in statute, which is currently authorized by the bylaws of the statutorily created Victims Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee. This Subcommittee was created in 1995 to review and respond to formal Victim Rights Act complaints.

▶24-4.1-117.3 (4) Provides that records submitted to the Advisory Board or Victim Rights Act Subcommittee will not be released until the Board resolves the report of non-compliance alleged in a Victim Rights Act complaint and that all victim information will be redacted from any information released to the public.

▶Current section 24-4.1-117.5 will be eliminated and all pertinent sections replaced in 24-4.1-117.3.

▶24-4.2-108 makes DCJ responsible for reporting annually to the Advisory Board on grants and contracts.

▶24-33.5-506 (1)(d) As a result of the consolidation process, the need to specify which agencies and organizations can apply for State Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (State VALE) funds is not necessary. This change would not eliminate any agency that is currently eligible to apply for State VALE funds from applying under the new statute.

▶24-33.5-506 (3) Removes the specific procedures listed under the Victim Rights Act and the specific services listed under 24.4.2-105 (Local VALE) as priorities because the priorities are already listed in the broader statute of 24.4.1-302.5 "Rights Afforded to Victims." This does not change the priorities, which are to implement the rights afforded to crime victims and the provision of services and programs for crime victims. The Victims Services Coordinator position is listed in 24-33.5-506 (c) and receives monies for this position without having to go through the competitive grant process.

▶24-33.5-507(2) Eliminates the requirement that the Executive Director promulgates rules prescribing procedures for administering the State VALE fund. Since 3 grant funds will be administered during one application process, it would be difficult to promulgate rules for only 1 of the 3 funds. DCJ has established by-laws and policies that are used for the administration of all grant funds.

Who supports the Bill?

Over the past six months, the Office for Victims Programs at the Division of Criminal Justice has conducted statewide and regional meetings with respect to the proposed consolidation process. Approximately 182 people attended these meetings. The combined board and streamlined funding proposal has been met with resounding support. To date, there are no known opponents to the proposed legislation.

Agencies that Support the Proposed Legislation

Colorado Department of Public Safety, Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Colorado District Attorney's Council, Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance, Department of Human Services.