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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the department of  
2 the prosecuting attorney of the city and county of Honolulu  
3 receives federal funding from the Victims of Crime Act to  
4 support the victim witness assistance program. Over the last  
5 several years, there has been a steady decline in these federal  
6 Victims of Crime Act funds. Victims of Crime Act is funded  
7 through the crime victims fund, which receives its funding from  
8 criminal fines and forfeitures, rather than taxpayer dollars.

9           The legislature further finds that the decline in Victims  
10 of Crime Act funding is primarily due to a decrease in revenue  
11 collected from fines and penalties imposed on federal offenders.  
12 This funding supports the salaries of the victim witness  
13 counselors who serve a pivotal role in court cases and support  
14 victims of crimes as their cases move through the criminal  
15 justice system.



1           The legislature also finds that in the upcoming fiscal year  
2 2026-2027, the department of the prosecuting attorney of the  
3 city and county of Honolulu will see the most drastic cut to its  
4 Victims of Crime Act funds since its inception, declining by  
5 forty per cent. As a result, the department requires additional  
6 state funding in the amount of \$500,000 for fiscal year  
7 2026-2027 to maintain a complete level of service for the victim  
8 witness assistance program to serve victims of crime in the  
9 county.

10           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

11           (1) Require the department of the prosecuting attorney of  
12 the city and county of Honolulu to submit a report to  
13 the legislature describing the implementation and  
14 allocation of funds for the victim witness assistance  
15 program; and

16           (2) Appropriate moneys to the department of the  
17 prosecuting attorney of the city and county of  
18 Honolulu to fill the gap in federal funding with state  
19 funds.

20           SECTION 2. (a) The department of the prosecuting attorney  
21 of the city and county of Honolulu shall submit a report of its



1 findings and recommendations, including any proposed  
2 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior  
3 to the convening of the regular session of 2027 describing the  
4 implementation and allocation of funds for the victim-witness  
5 assistance program. The report shall include, at minimum:

6 (1) A description of implementation steps taken during the  
7 reporting period, including any rules, policies,  
8 training, interagency coordination, and public  
9 outreach;

10 (2) Staffing and capacity information, including the  
11 number of victim-witness counselor positions  
12 authorized, filled, and vacant; hiring and separation  
13 activity during the reporting period; and average  
14 caseload per full-time equivalent victim-witness  
15 counselor position;

16 (3) Service delivery information, including:  
17 (A) The number of victims served, including new  
18 intakes and ongoing cases;  
19 (B) Types of services provided, which may include  
20 crisis response contacts, safety planning, court  
21 accompaniment, victim notification, restitution



1 assistance, and referrals to community-based  
2 services; and

3 (C) Any barriers to service delivery, including  
4 staffing limitations, training needs,  
5 administrative requirements, and information  
6 technology constraints, and actions taken to  
7 address these barriers;

8 (4) Timeliness and access measures, including the average  
9 time from referral or intake to initial contact with a  
10 victim, the extent to which victim-witness support was  
11 available for court proceedings when requested or  
12 otherwise required; and

13 (5) Language access and accessibility information,  
14 including languages requested and served, the use of  
15 interpretation or translation services, and any unmet  
16 language or accessibility needs identified during the  
17 reporting period.

18 (b) The report required under subsection (a) shall:

19 (1) Present data in an aggregated form and shall not  
20 include any personally identifying information,



1 confidential information, or information otherwise  
2 protected from disclosure by law; and

3 (2) Describe the methodology used and any material  
4 limitations on data quality or verification.

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 as a  
8 grant-in-aid to the department of the prosecuting attorney of  
9 the city and county of Honolulu for the victim witness  
10 assistance program, including the hiring of necessary staff.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
12 the prosecuting attorney of the city and county of Honolulu for  
13 the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



**Report Title:**

Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney Package; Victim Witness Assistance Program; VOCA; GIA; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to submit a report to the Legislature. Appropriates grant-in-aid moneys to the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu for the Victim Witness Assistance Program. (SD1)

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