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# NDAA's 2026 Legislative Priorities

## Prosecutor Recruitment and Retention – HIRRE Prosecutors Act

### **Background & Issue**

District Attorney offices are facing hiring and retaining challenges across the nation, regardless of region or size of office. In some instances, DA offices are operating well below capacity with positions vacant for over a year. Recently, the NDAA released its [\*National Prosecutor Retention Survey\*](#) report which found that of those respondents who have thought about leaving their offices at some point, 57% have considered doing so within the last month and 81% within the last year. The top three cited reasons these prosecutors seriously considered leaving were: better pay; their own well-being; and heavy caseloads.

### **HIRRE Prosecutors Act Summary**

The Helping Improve Recruitment and Retention Efforts (HIRRE) Prosecutors Act (H.R.6666/S.3438) is a bipartisan bill led by Congressmen Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), Don Bacon (R-NE), Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Chris Coons (D-DE). By providing District Attorneys' offices with the resources to properly hire and retain talented staff, the bill is flagship legislation for prosecutors as they look to ensure justice and enhance public safety. The HIRRE Prosecutors Act addresses issues prosecutors currently face with the following provisions:

- **Federal Funding Assistance**: Modeled after the successful Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program which has effectively supported law enforcement hiring and retention for over 30 years, the HIRRE Prosecutors Act will establish a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) grant program to assist State, Tribal, and Local governments in building robust prosecutorial teams.
- **Stable Funding**: The Act authorizes \$10 million annually to the program through 2030, ensuring a stable and consistent funding stream for prosecutor offices across the country.
- **Enhanced Training and Retention**: Beyond hiring, the awards may cover training and retention initiatives, to include job fairs, internship programs, and other creative initiatives ensuring prosecutors are well-prepared and supported.

**NDAA encourages all Members of Congress to cosponsor the HIRRE Prosecutors Act to support your local elected officials, and to ensure the public safety of your community.**



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## **Prosecutor Recruitment and Retention – Public Service Loan Forgiveness**

### **Background & Issue**

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) and Income Driven Repayment (IDR) programs enable experienced and dedicated prosecutors and their staff to continue serving their communities without undue financial hardship forcing them out of public service. It's crucial to emphasize that PSLF and IDRs are not broad loan cancellation initiatives; rather, they require significant, long-term commitment. Prosecutors eligible for PSLF and IDRs must serve in public roles for at least 10 years while making 120 timely payments. PSLF is a clear, powerful agreement: dedicate your career to public service and law enforcement, often at a considerable financial sacrifice, and your community will support you in return.

Across the nation, prosecutor offices are experiencing an unprecedented retention crisis. In rural America, it is not uncommon for one or two attorneys to manage hundreds of serious cases. Prosecutors are leaving their positions – not due to a loss of passion, but because financial pressures leave them no choice. This troubling trend translates directly into fewer cases prosecuted, prolonged delays, and in some instances, crimes going unprosecuted entirely. Without sustained support through PSLF and IDRs, these trends will *accelerate*.

If we fail to adequately support prosecutor recruitment and retention, the consequences are more than administrative – they present serious risks to public safety. We will witness fewer prosecutions of fentanyl trafficking cases, mounting backlogs in violent crime prosecutions, and victims enduring increasingly lengthy waits for justice.

### **Keep PSLF for Prosecutors and Public Servants**

NDAA has consistently engaged in the PSLF negotiations/reformation at the Department of Education, ensuring that the voice of prosecutors is heard as changes to the program are adopted. NDAA has submitted comments, provided testimony, and aided in drafting new provisional language. While we are fully engaged on this issue we need our Congressional Members to stress the significance of PSLF within their communities and show solidarity with their fellow public servants by urging the program to remain applicable to those who serve to ensure public safety.

**NDAA encourages all Members of Congress to stress the importance of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to the Administration and their fellow Members of Congress.**



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## **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)**

### **Background**

All individuals who collect compensation from the Victims of Crime Act receive the funding from the Crime Victim's Fund (CVF). The CVF is not supported by tax dollars - it is financed by federal criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments. Congress appropriates CVF funds to states on an annual basis. State VOCA Administrators then decide how much to distribute annually and to whom. In FY2024, the Office of Victims of Crime announced that subgrantees of the CVF served 7.1 million new and returning victims. The CVF provides support services through discretionary grants for child advocacy centers, victim assistance staff within local prosecutor offices, sexual assault survivor assistance, and other programs that foster a holistic ecosystem of support for victims of violent crimes.

### **Issue**

For the last decade funds released from the CVF have been unsteady due to a shrinking number of deposits. In 2021, Congress passed the VOCA Fix Act of 2021, which added money from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements to the CVF. It also allowed states to request no-cost extensions to use the funds and waive match requirements. While the VOCA Fix of 2021 provided limited relief, it did not establish consistent or stable revenue options to ensure steady allocations from the CVF to victims for years to come.

### **Immediate Potential Solutions**

Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act: In early 2025, both chambers of Congress introduced the Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act (H.R.909 / S.1892). The bipartisan legislation is a temporary fix to VOCA that would redirect *unobligated* funds collected through the False Claims Act (FCA) to the CVF through FY29 in the House version & FY30 in the Senate version. The FCA sets criminal and civil penalties for falsely billing the government or defrauding government programs. While this will provide immediate relief, it is not a permanent solution due to the sunset provision, as well as the nature of many of the settlements being multi-national and/or health care related, resulting in limited funds remaining for potential deposit into the CVF. That said, this is the most immediate and promising support for the CVF, with the bill having 327 co-sponsors in the House and 16 in the Senate. The bill passed the House on Jan. 12, 2026.

Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations: The Senate CJS bill (\$1.95B) and the House CJS bill (\$1.95B) requests came in much closer to previously appropriated levels. With the current lack of funds and no stable revenue streams, the NDAA recommends that Appropriators continue to provide stable VOCA funding.

**NDAA encourages all Members of Congress to cosponsor and pass the Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act, as well as stable and consistent appropriations to VOCA.**



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## **Combating the Opioid Crisis & Other Illicit Drugs**

### **Background & Issue**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicated there were over 80,000 drug overdose deaths in 2024. Synthetic opioid overdoses, primarily Fentanyl, have been an ongoing and serious issue in many communities across the nation. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) stated that fentanyl overdoses are the leading cause of death for Americans ages 18-45 and 7 out of 10 seized pills contain a lethal dose of fentanyl. In FY 2024 alone, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seized over 12,000 pounds of fentanyl coming across the southern border. The passage of the HALT Fentanyl act in 2025 which permanently classified fentanyl analogues under Schedule I is a great advancement but more needs to be done. In addition to the rise of fentanyl, other new drugs are being abused with deadly outcomes like Xylazine and Nitazenes. While fentanyl is currently the largest threat to our communities, the proper attention needs to be given to all illicit drugs that threaten public safety.

### **Contributing Solutions to Combat the Fentanyl Crisis:**

Cooper Davis and Devin Norring Act (S.2316/H.R.4518): This bipartisan, bicameral legislation is designed to combat the growing crisis of counterfeit pills and fentanyl sold through online platforms, with a specific focus on social media. The act requires online platforms to report suspected drug trafficking occurring on their services to the Drug Enforcement Administration. Similar to how platforms report child sexual abuse material, the bill creates a mandatory reporting framework so that law enforcement can identify bad actors, disrupt online drug networks, and prevent further deaths.

Pill Press Act (S.2870/H.R.5880): As circulation of fentanyl pills has risen, attacking fentanyl supply chains is an effective tactic to combat fentanyl overdoses. The Pill Press Act requires all pill presses to be engraved with a serial number. The bill also imposes penalties for the removal, alteration, or obliteration of the serial number, as well as the transport of any pill press with knowledge of a removed, altered, or obliterated serial number.

**NDAA encourages all Members of Congress to support the Cooper Davis and Devin Norring Act and the Pill Press Act. NDAA stands ready to work with any office on further efforts to address the current drug crisis.**



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## **Curbing Organized Retail Crime**

### **Background & Issue**

Retailers in the U.S. lose an estimated \$45 billion in inventory to organized retail theft. This does not include petty theft or economically driven shoplifters. An often overlooked but treacherous impact of retail crime beyond the financial loss to retailers is the loss of jobs in the retail industry. When organized crime becomes rampant within a community, store closures usually follow. Each store closure directly translates to a loss of jobs for all employees. With crime going unchecked, store closures and a loss of jobs, an area can quickly crumble into an unsafe, economic desert.

To address organized retail crime at the local level NDAA has partnered with the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA). The longstanding NDAA/RILA partnership has successfully brought together leading retailers and district attorneys' offices to discuss common challenges, share information on offenders, and identify criminal networks. NDAA and RILA urge Congress to adopt measures to drive down habitual theft, promote best practices for investigation collaboration, and help keep our communities economically thriving and safe. 94% of retailers agree that federal legislation is needed to combat organized retail crime effectively.

### **Legislative Solutions to assist Law Enforcement in disrupting organized retail crime:**

Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA) (S.1404/H.R.2853): CORCA is the key federal response to the coordinated retail theft and supply chain crime we are seeing plague communities across the country. The bill provides law enforcement and prosecutors with the appropriate tools to adequately go after organized retail crime rings by including provisions in criminal forfeiture law that directly address the organized retail crime. By including the convictions of interstate shipment theft, and the sale or transportation of stolen goods, this allows prosecutors to go after the leaders of these crime rings instead of the front-line boosters. It also enables prosecutors to pursue organized crime rings that utilize foreign commerce, including the internet to facilitate their operations. The bill also establishes a coordination center to enhance local, state, and federal communications as they work in partnership on taking down elusive retail crime rings that frequently shift between jurisdictional lines.

**NDAA encourages Congress to pass the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act and welcomes additional legislation to address organized retail crime.**



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## **Bolstering Online Child Safety**

### **Background & Issue**

In 2024, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) had over 20.5 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation online, related to 29.2 million incidents of suspected child sexual exploitation. In recent years the number of reported online enticement has exploded. Online enticement includes grooming methods such as the offender developing a rapport through compliments, pretending to be younger, and discussing “shared” interests. In addition to online enticement, the utilization of generative artificial intelligence has become a threat to children’s safety online. Generative AI has been used to manipulate everyday images of children into child sexual abuse material (CSAM), and mask offenders as they trick minors into the self-generation of CSAM.

In order to combat online enticement and the sexual exploitation of children, federal law needs to hold online platforms responsible for what happens on their sites. Additional funding and resources for law enforcement and child-serving organizations to adequately pursue offenders and provide support services to survivors is also essential.

### **Legislation to address child online sexual exploitation:**

Kids Online Safety (KOSA) Act (S.1748/H.R.6484): This bipartisan, bicameral legislation stresses “safety by design,” by addressing the exploitation of minors on social media companies by requiring online platforms to have all the security features default to the most secure setting for registered account users under the age of 18. Online platforms are also prohibited from conducting market or product research on children under 13 and may only engage in research on those between 13 and 17 with parental consent. The bill also requires online platforms to provide users notice of the use of user-specific algorithms and permit them to switch to an algorithm that doesn’t rely on user-specific data. The provisions of the bill would be enforced through the Federal Trade Commission.

Enhancing Necessary Federal Offenses Regarding Child Exploitation (ENFORCE) Act (S. 3021/H.R.4831): This legislation closes current gaps in federal law by ensuring that child predators who use generative AI to create, alter, or distribute CSAM can be prosecuted under the same criminal statutes and penalties that apply to traditional CSAM offenses.

**NDAA encourages all Members of Congress to support KOSA and the ENFORCE Act. NDAA is willing to review and support any legislation that protects our most vulnerable community members.**