Email template for House and Senate offices:

Dear [staffer name],

My name is [your name and CAC name, if applicable], and I am a constituent from [your location]. I am writing to urge you to co-sponsor and support *[S.611 in the Senate // H.R.1652 in the House] ,* the bipartisan, bicameral *Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act (“the VOCA Fix Act”).*

As a [staff / Board Member / supporter] of the Massachusetts Children’s Alliance (MACA), the Victims of Crime Act is crucial to maintaining funding for essential services they help provide for children. MACA is the statewide coalition of Children’s Advocacy Centers, which are first responders in addressing child abuse by bringing together a coordinated team of experts in medicine, law enforcement, victim advocacy, mental health, and other disciplines to both hold offenders accountable and help children and families heal in a comprehensive, seamless way. Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs), as well as other victim service providers for programs serving survivors of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, drunk driving, homicide, and other crimes, rely heavily on Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grants. VOCA also supplements state victim compensation funds. VOCA grants are not taxpayer-funded; instead, VOCA is funded by monetary penalties from federal criminal convictions. As the Department of Justice is entering into more deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements, the money available for VOCA grants has dropped dramatically. As a result, **victim assistance grants have been cut by two-thirds** compared to three years ago, and victim service providers are facing further potentially catastrophic cuts in their VOCA grants! Moreover, state victim compensation programs are struggling and are unable to reimburse medical bills, lost wages, and funeral costs.

**[In this area, highlight the impact of the current VOCA cuts to your CACs, and what the overall impact would be if VOCA isn't fixed – below is information specific to Massachusetts statewide.]**

Funding for the coming year is at a 5 year low, meaning less funding to support services for crime victims. Reduced dollars will impact services to all victims of crime including child victims, human trafficking, domestic violence programs, rape crisis services, and other victims of violent crimes.

VOCA funding is critical for child victims of sexual and physical abuse and exploitation in Massachusetts. With nearly 9,400 children receiving VOCA-funded services at their local Children’s Advocacy Center, a 35% decrease would impact 3,290 children, leaving them without access to services necessary to help them heal.

In FY’2020, VOCA funds supported 16,694 services for child victims, including 1222 forensic interviews, 1491 coordinated team responses, 7677 evidence-based trauma-informed therapy sessions, 1382 mental health referrals and coordination, and 4922 other family/victim advocacy and community outreach services.

VOCA funds also support an innovative network of case managers across Massachusetts for children who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation, or trafficking, providing intensive case coordination and services to 609 exploited children 9,867 times last year alone. Cuts to VOCA funding would put this program and services to the most vulnerable victims in jeopardy.

The *VOCA Fix Act* solves this crisis by redirecting monetary penalties from deferred and non-prosecution agreements to the VOCA fund and increasing the federal government’s contribution to state victim compensation funds. More than 1680 organizations and government agencies have signed onto a letter in support of the *VOCA Fix Act*, which can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/23drue5v>. You can find specific information about the impact of VOCA cuts on Massachusetts at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KLG29hx6omPPHRy1BXCwtrazp3ypqybw/view>.

As a constituent and as someone who cares deeply about victims and survivors, I urge you to cosponsor and support swift passage of the VOCA Fix Act.

If you have any questions, please contact [Your name] at  [your email] or Denise Edwards with the National Children’s Alliance (dedwards@nca-online.org).