



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



Follow us @VenturaCountyDA
vcdistrictattorney.com

Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

Approved: SW
Date: September 27, 2024
Release No.: 24-115

Governor Signs AB 2432 Providing New Revenue Stream for Victim Assistance

VENTURA, Calif. – Governor Gavin Newsom has signed Assembly Bill 2432, authored by California Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, and strongly supported by Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. AB 2432 will allow state courts to levy increased monetary penalties on corporations convicted of criminal offenses. Such penalties would, in turn, provide much-needed funding for crime victim service programs in California. These programs provide free medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, courtroom advocacy, and temporary housing, to victims and their families.

“This bill is about fairness and justice — when major corporations break the law, they must be held accountable,” Assemblymember Gabriel has said previously.

Funds collected through AB 2432 will help to compensate for the dwindling dollars going into the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. VOCA, which had been a cornerstone of financial support for crime victim programs nationwide, is primarily funded through monetary penalties paid by federal offenders. These funds are distributed to states, which in turn allocate them to district attorney offices and non-profit organizations to benefit crime victims. A substantial decline in federal deposits has led to a significant reduction in available VOCA funds, posing a severe threat to these crucial services.

“We are facing an unprecedented shortfall in federal funding and can no longer count on VOCA to sustain and support California crime victims,” District Attorney Erik Nasarenko said. “When there is deliberate concealment, fraud, injury, loss of life, misdeeds, and wrongdoing, we need to hold those corporations accountable. AB 2432 helps us accomplish that.”

This year the national VOCA allocation is expected to see a 40% reduction from the previous year’s \$1.9 billion. In Ventura County alone, this shortfall threatens more than \$2.3 million annually in VOCA funds, directly impacting services for some of the community's most vulnerable members.

The District Attorney's office has already been notified, grants for assisting farmworkers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and human trafficking victims will no longer be funded, resulting in a loss of over \$280,000 annually. Additionally, the office is set to lose elder abuse grant funds totaling \$217,000 annually, depriving victims above the age of 65 of essential in-home assistance and counseling.