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**Lt. Gov. Austin Davis, Commonwealth Victim Advocate, and Victim Services Coalitions Highlight Importance of Victims Compensation Assistance Program**

*The Shapiro-Davis Administration has proposed a \$5 million investment in VCAP in the 2024-25 budget to support this vital program, which is running low on funding to support victims.*

*VCAP is a financial lifeline for crime victims – reimbursing them for counseling, loss of earnings, funeral expenses, and more.*

**Harrisburg, PA — Lt. Governor Austin Davis** and **Pennsylvania Victim Advocate Suzanne Estrella** teamed up with the **Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV)** and **Coalition to Advance Respect (PCAR)**, and **Victim/Witness Services of the Lancaster County District Attorney's Office** to highlight the importance of supporting victims and survivors of crime and to encourage support for the Shapiro-Davis Administration's proposed \$5 million investment in the Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) in the 2024-25 state budget.

"I've been working on the issue of gun violence for nearly two decades, and I've met countless survivors and family members who've lost loved ones to the epidemic of gun violence. In the aftermath of a shooting, victims experience devastating mental, physical, emotional and financial impacts that echo throughout their lives," said **Davis, chair of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) which administers VCAP**. "That's why we must not turn our backs on victims. The Shapiro-Davis budget – and our proposed investment into the Crime Victims Compensation Fund – will help heal our communities and save lives."

VCAP serves as a critical financial lifeline for people who have experienced crime victimization. Each year, the program receives an average of 12,000 claims for eligible expenses including medical and counseling expenses, loss of earnings, loss of support, stolen cash, relocation, funeral, or crime scene cleanup, among others. Over the past five years, PCCD has paid more than 76,000 VCAP claims totaling \$65 million in eligible expenses for citizens across all 67 Pennsylvania counties.

Governor Shapiro's proposed \$5 million dollar investment into Pennsylvania's Crime Victims Compensation Fund in the 2024-25 state budget comes at a crucial juncture.

For the past few years, VCAP's expenditures have outpaced deposits into the Crime Victims Compensation Fund, putting the VCAP fund at a critically low level. The proposed infusion of state funding in the Shapiro-Davis budget will set VCAP on a more stable course, ensuring that crime victims can continue to receive the support they need and deserve.

"The mission of the Pennsylvania Coalition to Advance Respect is to work to eliminate all forms of sexual violence and to advocate for the rights and needs of victims of sexual assault. It takes courage to come forward and seek assistance after experiencing sexual violence. Survivors of sexual violence deserve adequately funded services to assist them throughout their healing journey," said **Gabriella Romeo, Public Policy Director for PCAR**. "As we continue our work to eliminate sexual violence, we must invest in victim services to ensure stable support exists for all survivors across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is our duty to advocate for the rights and needs of survivors and support life changing services like Pennsylvania's Crime Victims Compensation Fund."

If you or someone you know was affected by a crime, visit our [PA Crime Victims website](#) for information and resources.

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