



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
KATHARINE T. SULLIVAN
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE
45TH ANNUAL TRAINING EVENT
MONDAY, JULY 22, 2019
PHOENIX, AZ**

Thank you, Judge [Richard] Barajas. I'm thrilled to be here. Judge Barajas has so many incredible achievements in his life. The one I like to highlight is the Presidential Award for Victim Services, which was, of course, well-deserved – and he accepted it at the White House. This was back in 1992, under President George H.W. Bush. I recently watched a You Tube clip of the ceremony, and guess who was with the President handing out the awards? Our amazing Attorney General, Bill Barr!

Judge Barajas is one of the constants of the victims' rights movement, and I know we are all grateful for the many years of dedicated service he's given to the field. Judge Barajas, as you step down as NOVA's Executive Director, please know how very highly you are esteemed and how very much you are appreciated, both by your colleagues in the field and by your friends at the Department of Justice.

It hopefully won't go unnoticed that the man helping to hand out those awards 27 years ago is still hard at work, leading the Department of Justice and its efforts to support crime victims in America. Attorney General Barr is a man of the highest principles, committed to the rule of law and to righting the wrongs that have been done to so many victims in our country. Many of you might recall that he served on President Reagan's Domestic Policy Council when so many of the landmark events were occurring in this field. Make no mistake, he is our biggest advocate – and you can count on his full support for the amazing work that you are all doing.

In addition to Judge Barajas, I want to thank Claire Ponder Selib and all the exceptional people at the National Organization for Victim Assistance. Thank you for the chance to join you today. Let me also thank my wonderful colleague, Darlene Hutchinson. No one in government understands the concerns of victims better than Darlene. She has been down her own path of victimization and recovery, and she has emerged as a champion for all victims of crime. We are blessed to have someone of her strength and vision leading our Office for Victims of Crime.

And let me certainly not forget to thank all of you—the men and women who work so hard every day to bring comfort and healing to crime victims. Many of you are victims yourselves, and you know first-hand the awful toll that crime exacts. You have been through the

worst, and you have shown us the best. Others of you bring to your work an instinctive sense of compassion and a drive for justice that we can only marvel at. And quite a few of you are members of our nation's Armed Forces, the finest military on earth. We are so thankful for your service, both to our country and to our nation's crime victims. You have all made it possible for victims to get the support they need and deserve.

I'm proud to have been part of the victims' movement myself. Some of the formative years of my career were spent as a member the 9th Judicial District Victim Compensation Board. I also served as a Deputy District Attorney, and I was active on our community-based domestic violence task force, where I worked closely with law enforcement and victim advocates to prosecute domestic violence offenders and deliver services to victims. Then, in my 11 years as a state trial court judge in Eagle County, Colorado, I heard some 45,000 cases, many of them—way them—related to domestic violence, sexual assault and violent crime. And prior to joining the Office of Justice Programs, I had the privilege of leading the Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women, where I was able to continue the good work of helping victims.

When Attorney General Barr gave me the honor of leading the Office of Justice Programs, I jumped at the chance because I knew it would mean I'd be back doing what I love—fighting for crime victims. And even better, I'd be doing it as part of an Administration that is wholeheartedly committed to securing justice for those who have suffered the effects of crime, and advocating for their rights. And of course, I'd be working for an Attorney General who does more than pay lip service to victims' rights and services—he fights for victims, and he fights hard, doing everything he can to give those who serve them the support they need.

From a grant-making agency like the Office of Justice Programs, there is no better way to show that support than through funding. And here, there can be no question that the Department of Justice has been working hard to do its part. Last year, we awarded historic amounts of money to the victims' field—more than \$4.4 billion—and we'll be awarding an additional \$3.3 billion this year. At the moment, OVC staff are managing more than \$8 billion in grant programs, which is truly impressive. The best part is, the vast majority of that funding goes to about 7,000 local direct service programs, including children's advocacy centers, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, human trafficking and elder abuse programs, and victim assistance units in prosecutors' offices and law enforcement departments. Much of the rest of the money goes to state victim compensation programs, which reimburses about a quarter-million people annually for out-of-pocket expenses, all to help put victims on a path to healing.

OVC, along with its sister offices in OJP, is also using its resources to meet specific challenges in the victim service field. Last year, for example, we awarded more than \$67 million to combat human trafficking and serve trafficking victims. We're making another \$85 million available this year. We've also dramatically expanded our support for victim services in tribal communities. This is a top priority and a personal mission of our Attorney General. We recently awarded 154 grants, totaling \$88 million, under a first-ever Tribal Victim Service Set-Aside, and we are making an additional \$167 million in set-aside funding available this fiscal year. The solicitation for that program is open until mid-August, and I strongly encourage those of you who work with victims in Indian country to consider applying.

And speaking of grants, I'll pause here to put in a shameless plug. Darlene and Kate Peterson in our Office for Victims of Crime will be giving a workshop on applying for OVC grants today at 2:45. In addition to being the visionary leader of OVC, Darlene has been a crime victims advocate for more than two decades, and she understands as well as anyone how important these grant resources can be. Kate is herself a brilliant attorney who now runs OVC's state division.

We are single-minded in our commitment to getting you the resources you need to serve victims in your community. I promise you that I will be relentless in pursuing the resources you need to do your jobs effectively, and with the passion and compassion that you bring to your work every day. As the head of OJP, I have the privilege of overseeing six amazing program offices whose work on behalf of public safety complements each other so well. I will make sure that the needs and rights of crime victims are part of every step of our decision-making. My pledge is to make OJP a truly victim-centered organization.

Before I yield my time, I want to express my appreciation to NOVA for the incredible contributions you have made to the victims' field throughout your history. It's no exaggeration to say that there may have been no victims' rights movement without the National Organization for Victim Assistance. When President Reagan advocated for the Victims of Crime Act and the Crime Victims Fund in the 80s, he was building on momentum generated, in large part, by this venerable organization. There's no way he, or any of us, could have envisioned the impact your work would eventually have. Darlene and I are so honored to continue what you started.

And in that vein, I just want to express my gratitude once again to Judge Barajas, and to another icon, Steve Twist, and to those of you who will be rotating off the NOVA board. We are so thankful for your leadership and for your dedicated and sustained service to a truly noble cause.

Finally, to all of you, please know that you have the deepest gratitude and the fullest support of our Attorney General and of this Department of Justice. To us, you are all heroes, and you are doing the work of angels. Thank you for all you do, and thank you for your time.

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