



May 7, 2024

Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

I write to you in support of the sound policies of S. 3763, the *Violent Incident Clearance and Technological Investigative Methods Act*, also known as the VICTIM Act. This bipartisan legislation addresses the important issue of improving clearance rates so that crimes in the United States can be solved and closure and justice can be restored to victims and their families.

Although violent crime across the nation is going down, almost half of homicides and violent crimes go unsolved every year. In fact, between 2019 and 2022, murder clearance rates fell from 61% in 2019 to 53%, marking an all-time low.¹ And for all violent crimes, the clearance rate went from almost 46% in 2019 to 36.7% in 2022, a decline that has impacted rural and urban communities alike.² Law enforcement officers need more tools and resources to help them solve crimes so that public safety can be promoted, and victims' families can gain closure.

The VICTIM Act promotes policies that will help detectives solve crimes and increase clearance rates. This bill would help law enforcement nationwide solve homicides and violent crimes more effectively by setting up a grant program focused on law enforcement and evidence technician hiring, training, and retention; upgrading evidence-processing technology and equipment; developing best practices on improving clearance rates; and expanding services to victims of violent crimes. The VICTIM Act also ensures that the taxpayer dollar is spent wisely by requiring grant recipients to report data related to clearance rates to the Justice Department, which would in turn be reported to Congress.

Improving clearance rates is essential to building and protecting public safety. There is not a political issue, but a common sense one. Crimes must be solved, victims must see justice, and our criminal justice system must be held to account as measured by public safety. With that being said, the policies of the VICTIM Act accomplish these goals.

¹ <https://www.murderdata.org/p/blog-page.html>

² <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/downloads>; *see also* <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/05/opinion/police-crime-data.html>.

I urge this Committee to consider and advance this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Brett Tolman
Executive Director
Right on Crime