



H.R. 5768 VICTIM Act Fact Sheet

Despite a substantial decline in homicides and violent crime since the peak rates in the early 1990's, the number of homicides in 2021, in 27 major cities studied, increased by 5% from 2020 and by 44% from 2019. This increase in homicides over the last two years occurred throughout the country, with 40% higher per capita murder rates in the 25 states Donald Trump won in the last presidential election and homicide rates in rural America increased by 25% in 2020.

Just as homicide and other violent crime rates have increased, law enforcement agencies struggle to consistently clear cases. In 2020, law enforcement agencies solved 1,200 more homicides than in 2019, an increase of 14%, but due to the dramatic rise in homicides, the clearance rate in 2020 fell to about 50%. This drop follows a consistent decline in clearance rates historically from 83% in 1965 to 61% in 2007. The failure to consistently close homicide and other violent crime cases can harm the reputation of the agency and impact public trust and confidence in law enforcement. Furthermore, failure to clear a case leaves the victim and their family members without justice or closure.

H.R. 5768 would provide grant funding to state, tribal, or local law enforcement agencies and prosecuting offices to:

- hire, retain, or train detectives to investigate homicides, rapes, sexual assaults, kidnappings, and non-fatal shootings;
- train personnel to address the needs of victims and family members;
- acquire, upgrade, or replace investigative or evidence processing technology or equipment and train evidence processing personnel;
- ensure victim services are funded, staffed, and trained and provide resources to victims and their family members; and
- develop competitive and evidence-based programs to improve clearance rates and victim services.

H.R. 5768 also requires the National Institute of Justice to conduct bi-annual evaluations of the VICTIM grants and the practices deployed by the grant recipients to identify policies and procedures that have successfully improved clearance rates for homicides and non-fatal shootings.

The bill is widely supported by the law enforcement community including the Fraternal Order of Police, the Major City Chiefs Association, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, and the National Association of Police Organizations.

Prepared by House Judiciary Committee Democratic Staff

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