

May 27, 2009

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6348

The Honorable Dave Camp
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6348

Re: Crime Victim Restitution and Court Fee Intercept Act, H.R. 1956

Dear Chairman Rangel and Ranking Member Camp:

We, the undersigned national crime victim organizations, are writing to express our strong support of the Crime Victim Restitution and Court Fee Intercept Act, H.R. 1956. This important bill would permit an offset against federal income tax refunds to pay for past-due State-level criminal restitution orders and other judicial debt.

The payment of court-ordered restitution is of great importance to crime victims. Repayment of victims' financial losses, including property losses, can be crucial in helping to repair the damages from the offense. Restitution is also a tangible recognition by the state, and the offender, of the harm suffered by the victim and the need to make amends.

Our criminal justice system benefits from the enforcement of restitution orders as well. When a criminal court has issued an order, and no action is taken when that order is disregarded, respect for our justice system suffers: victims lose faith in justice; criminal justice system employees become cynical about the workings of the system; and offenders learn that they will not be held accountable when they conduct themselves as if they are "above the law."

Collection of past-due restitution from income tax refunds otherwise owing to the defendant is appropriate and effective. Restitution orders issued by Federal court can already be collected from income tax refunds through the Treasury Offset Program, as can outstanding State orders for child support. At the State level, ten states permit state income tax refunds to be applied to outstanding restitution orders, collecting millions of dollars for crime victims each year.

On behalf of the nation's crime victims, we urge you to support the Crime Victim Restitution and Court Fee Intercept Act. If you have any questions or would like

May 27, 2009
Page two

additional information, please contact Susan Howley, Public Policy Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime, at (202) 467-8722.

Sincerely,



Laura Dean Mooney, National President
Mothers Against Drunk Driving



Monika Johnson Hostler, President
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence



Steve Derene, Executive Director
National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators

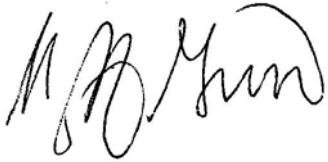


Dan Eddy, Executive Director
National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards



Mark Butler, Acting Executive Director
National Center for Victims of Crime

May 27, 2009
Page three



Meg Garvin, Executive Director
National Crime Victim Law Institute

NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Will Marling, Executive Director
National Organization for Victim Assistance



Dan Levey, President
National Organization of Parents of Murdered Children, Inc.

cc. The Honorable Erik Paulsen
The Honorable Artur Davis
The Honorable Ted Poe