

## **New Grant Process Coming in 2010 – Proposed Legislation to Make This Happen**

The Office for Victims Programs at the Division of Criminal Justice will be consolidating the VOCA, VAWA and State VALE funding cycles and allocation processes in order to develop a comprehensive funding strategy to sustain a quality infrastructure of victim services throughout Colorado. These changes will take place in 2010. Meetings were held throughout the state during the summer of 2008 to explain the process, gather feedback, and discuss questions and concerns. Approximately 200 people attended these regional meetings.

Legislation was initiated to facilitate the statutory changes needed for the consolidation to take place. Senate Bill 09-047 is being sponsored by Senate Newell and Representative Roberts.

The legislation seeks to streamline funding for services to crime victims in Colorado by merging the three existing statewide advisory Boards that make recommendations for this type of funding to the Division of Criminal Justice, including: 1) The Victims Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee (Coordinating Committee); 2) the Stop Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Board; and 3) the State Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (State VALE) Board. These 3 boards would be combined into one board called the Crime Victim Services Advisory Board (Advisory Board). The Coordinating Committee currently makes funding recommendations on the federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) grants, the State VALE Board currently makes recommendations for State VALE grant funding, and the VAWA Board currently makes funding recommendations for the federal Violence Against Women grants. The bill also:

- ▶ Establishes the Victim Rights Act Subcommittee in statute. This Subcommittee was created in 1995 to review and respond to formal Victim Rights Act complaints. It is currently authorized in the bylaws of the statutorily created Victims Compensation and Assistance Coordinating Committee.

- ▶ Provides that records submitted to the Advisory Board or Victim Rights Act Subcommittee will not be released until the Board resolves the report of non-compliance alleged in a Victim Rights Act complaint. It also states that all victim information will be redacted from any information released to the public.

The bill has passed out of the Senate and will be heard in the House Judiciary Committee on March 12, 2009.