



The General Assembly

STATE OF IOWA
Ninetieth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

May 1, 2023

Via electronic mail and regular mail

Honorable Brenna Bird
Attorney General
State of Iowa

Dear Attorney General Bird:

Iowa has a proud history of supporting victims of sexual assault. So it was shocking to learn through the media during Sexual Assault Awareness Month that you suspended funding for medical care for survivors of sexual assault. This decision is heartless and an unnecessary assault on the bodies of Iowans, most of whom are children, who are survivors of sexual assault.

"Victims of rape and child abuse have an acute need for timely access to health services, including contraception to prevent unintended pregnancy and abortion care. Cost should never be a barrier for rape victims seeking medical care." – Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault

We write today to urge you to immediately reinstate the Attorney General's longstanding program of providing survivors of sexual assault — the majority of whom are children — with the medical care they need, including access to emergency contraception and safe, legal abortion care. There is no cause to keep nearly 70 sexual assault survivors and possibly more in limbo. These funds are there to help victims; they are not taxpayer funds.

Additionally, we request:

- the rationale for suspending critical victim services while your office conducts its audit;
- an expected timeline for the completion of your office's victim services audit; and
- listing of all services suspended during the audit and number and type of Iowa victims impacted.

Depriving victims of essential care while your office continues its months-long audit is an attack on justice. Victims, advocates, prosecutors, and law enforcement deserve to know why needed resources are being withheld by your office. We stand united in urging you to reverse course and give survivors of sexual assault the financial ability to care for their bodies and move forward in their healing process.

Thank you, and we look forward to your response.

Janet Petersen
State Senator

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janet Petersen". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Todd Taylor
State Senator

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Todd Taylor". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

cc:
Sam Langholz
Dan Breitbarth