



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Senator Helming Announces Funding to Help Domestic Violence Survivors

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GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced that Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes Inc. is one of four organizations in the Wayne-Finger Lakes region to receive grants to assist victims of domestic violence and other serious crimes. The federally funded grants are administered by the New York State Office of Victim Services and provide free legal services to crime victims in civil matters, such as matrimonial, custody, and financial issues.

“Victims of domestic violence and other serious crimes truly represent some of the most courageous yet most vulnerable people in our communities. They need our help to both seek justice for the crimes committed against them and recover physically and emotionally from the aftermath as well as deal with the issues that result from their victimization. Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes Inc. is an outstanding organization that puts in tremendous effort to support crime victims in our region in several different ways. I am pleased to announce this funding to further the work of Safe Harbors and other area organizations to meet the needs of our crime victims. I look forward to continuing to work with Safe Harbors to bring a domestic violence shelter to the Finger Lakes region,” Senator Helming said.

Safe Harbors, which serves Ontario, Seneca, and Yates Counties, will receive \$104,572. Also earning awards are Victim Resource Center of the Finger Lakes Inc., which serves Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates Counties, \$93,744; Cayuga Counseling Services Inc., which serves Cayuga and Onondaga Counties, \$131,524; and Legal Aid Society of Rochester, which serves Monroe County, \$111,212.

Senator Helming has worked with representatives Safe Harbors, law enforcement officers, and community leaders over the past several months to assist Safe Harbors in its effort to establish housing for domestic violence victims in its service area. In the meantime, this funding will allow the organization to help crime victims who face numerous hurdles that can prevent them from securing legal representation in civil matters.

For example, some crime victims cannot afford an attorney or are unaware of the free legal services available to them in their community. At the same time, victims of certain crimes, such as domestic violence, may be reluctant to seek assistance because of fear or embarrassment. Safe Harbors and similar organizations will use these grants, funded through the federal Victims of Crime Act, to hire or contract attorneys who will represent individuals in civil matters. These matters include protective or restraining orders, issues with housing or custody, or legal intervention

with creditors and other entities because of identity theft or financial fraud.