

**VICTIMS OF CRIME
AND THE VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT**

- In its efforts to deter and punish violent criminals, the Violent Crime Control Act does not forget crime victims themselves. The Clinton Administration pushed for many important provisions to uphold victims' rights and to provide much needed services.
- The Crime Act mandates that individuals convicted of certain federal crimes related to sexual abuse or child pornography be ordered to pay restitution to their victims. The defendants must pay the full amount of the victim's losses, including the costs of physical, psychiatric, or psychological care; lost income; and attorneys' fees. Strict limitations are imposed on the court's ability to decline to order restitution.
- The Crime Act also establishes the victim's right of allocution, allowing victims of violent crime or sexual abuse or their family members to speak to the court before the imposition of a sentence. This means that the victims of violent crime will have the same right afforded criminals, to speak at sentencing hearings.
- The Crime Act also protects victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse through a number of tough provisions, including:
 - A federal cause of action that allows victims of a gender-motivated felony crime of violence to bring civil suit for damages or equitable relief in state or federal court;
 - The rape victim shield law, which protects victims from abusive inquiries regarding their private sexual conduct;
 - Full faith and credit to protect battered women who move across state lines. The Act establishes for the nationwide enforcement of protection of abuse orders entered in any court and provides penalties for crossing state lines to abuse a spouse or violate a protection order; and
 - A ban on firearm possession for domestic abusers. The Act prohibits anyone facing a restraining order for domestic abuse from possessing a firearm.
- The Crime Act also authorizes an \$800 million formula grant program to improve the law enforcement, prosecution, and victim service response to violence against women. At least 25 percent of those funds must be dedicated to enhanced direct services for victims of these crimes.