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**From:** Bethany r [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 8, 2024 3:02 PM  
**To:** Stevenson, Kirsten <Kirsten.Stevenson@hamilton.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: Submission to speak

Dear Kirsten,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the reconsideration of the police budget.

As a recent volunteer with Victim Services, I am deeply concerned about the current funding model for our program. It is both shameful and unbelievable that volunteers, who often represent marginalized individuals in society, such as women and people of color, are expected to shoulder the financial burden of their service. We are required to own a car, cover all mileage expenses incurred during our service, use our personal phones, and commit to eight weeks of training. Additionally, we are expected to be available on-call, including over night shifts, four days a month, for an entire year.

It's important to recognize that this setup results in substantial cost savings for the police department, potentially amounting to hundreds of thousands, and realistically probably millions, of dollars. However, it also represents an abuse of the goodwill of citizens who wish to support victims of crime. Volunteers should not be forced to subsidize the delivery of essential services, especially when the police department boasts the largest budget among municipal services.

In light of these concerns, I find it unacceptable that the police department is requesting additional funding this year. It is wildly unfair to rely on volunteers, many whom are recovering victims of crime, to fill gaps in service provision while simultaneously seeking more resources. This approach not only exploits the generosity of volunteers but also perpetuates systemic inequities within our community, further burdening marginalized individuals.

I urge the Board to reconsider the funding model for Victim Services and to allocate appropriate resources to ensure that volunteers are not unfairly and unethically financially burdened. It is essential to uphold the principles of fairness and equity in budget allocation, particularly when it comes to supporting vulnerable individuals in our community.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter.

Sincerely, Bethany