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**Betsy Sundermann**  
*Cincinnati City Councilmember*

**June 11, 2021**

## MOTION

**WE MOVE** the Administration draft an ordinance to provide \$208,000 to the CCROW (Cincinnati Citizens Respect Our Witnesses) program. The CCROW witness support program provides a variety of services including court-related services, social services, and referrals to counseling services designed to meet the needs of witnesses and their loved ones. The source of this funding should be a portion of closeout funds from the Fiscal Year 2021 budget.

These funds will be used for three things: upgrading fingerprint identification software, adding additional part-time help, and funding a mentoring program for youth victims and witnesses.

\$148,000 will be for upgrading the fingerprinting identification software, which will help to identify both cold case and new perpetrators. It will provide enough funding for this service for the next 5 years.

\$40,000 of the funding will allow for part-time assistance, as CCROW has found themselves to be understaffed; an additional part-time staff member will help them to remain proactive. This staff member will be used for district cases to accompany witnesses to court. They will also help victims to obtain compensation for therapy and court expenses, as well as providing general support for victims and witnesses.

\$20,000 will be used for providing mentoring services for youth survivors and witnesses to help deter them from becoming perpetrators or victims in the future. This population is particularly susceptible to trauma that can cause long-term negative mental and emotional effects as well as increase the likelihood that the individual becomes a perpetrator or victim in the future. This mentoring will help them to heal from their experience and to stop people from becoming perpetrators before they do.

Funding for these three areas will help CCROW to bring justice to families by using new technology and additional assistance to provide the appropriate resources in the areas of comfort and assistance for families as well as the ability to solve cold cases and new cases. These victims and witnesses need our support.

In recent years, it has become a priority to the public and to the Cincinnati Police Department that social workers be incorporated into police work to aid those affected by crimes in a multitude of ways. CCROW has repeatedly demonstrated their efficacy in providing support for the most vulnerable members of our community, and this funding will assist them in doing so.

*Betsy Sundermann*  
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