

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

ONE CONSTITUTION PLAZA
7TH FLOOR
HARTFORD, CT 06103
(860) 549-8463

<http://murphy.senate.gov>

October 16, 2013

Dear Friends:

In the twelve years since the horrifying morning of September 11, 2001, when we lost nearly 3,000 of our brothers and sisters, our country has grown in ways that highlight both our greatest accomplishments and our starkest challenges. With the help of groups like VOICES, we have highlighted the compassionate and willing spirit that Americans share, a capacity for remembering those we've lost and using their memory to help those they left behind. Our ability to use our history to better inform and improve upon our future is a unique and valuable trait, one that VOICES serves as a leader in showcasing.

The unfortunate truth is that, in the decade subsequent to 9/11, we have continued to experience unspeakable tragedy on what feels like an ever-increasing basis. This tragedy comes in many forms. Some of it is manmade, most recently with domestic attacks in a movie theatre in Aurora, Colorado, a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, a marathon in Boston, Massachusetts. Some of it is natural, with Hurricanes Irene and Sandy devastating the East Coast in successive years. With tragedy so prevalent, VOICES has taken on an even more pressing role in shaping our response to the overwhelming magnitude of these acts. Their guidance in helping communities prepare for the realities of mass violence and cope with the aftermath of these events serves as an invaluable resource, giving assistance when it is most needed.

Without organizations like VOICES showing us how to navigate trauma, communities would be left to shoulder the burden blindly. You teach our nation the most valuable lesson of them all: we are not alone. We do not have to suffer alone, grieve alone, feel as though we have no one to whom we can turn. You give victims a light, one that shines through the darkness to show us a way back to safety. You show us that though we may never again be the people we were before devastation found us, we can use these tragedies to find one another and find comfort in our shared experience. You bring honor to those we've lost through your indomitable desire to assist others who are suffering and you should feel immense pride in knowing that, through you, they are helping to build a better and more supportive nation.

Every best wish,



Christopher S. Murphy