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PRESS RELEASE

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PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AWARDED GRANT TO AID VICTIMS OF JANUARY 8TH MASS SHOOTING

(Tucson, Arizona) – Barbara LaWall, Pima County Attorney, is pleased to announce that the Victim Services Division of the Pima County Attorney's Office has been awarded a grant to provide services to victims of the mass shooting at Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' "Congress on your Corner" event on January 8, 2011.

The *Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice* awarded a \$1.75 million dollar grant under the federal *Department of Justice Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP)* to assist the Victims Services Division as it provides long-term continuing services to the victims of the shooting including: counseling, group therapy, emergency travel, information and referral coordination, insurance copayments, and coordination with other community resources. The purpose of the award is to assist the Victims Services Division for the next three years as it provides continuing service to victims while they progress through the criminal justice system. Throughout the judicial process there will be a need for continued emotional support, information about victims' rights and victim compensation, information about the criminal justice system, rehabilitation expenses, case specific information, and court advocacy and accompaniment.

The *Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program* was created following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in order to provide support for the recovery of victims of an act of mass violence. AEAP guidelines define an act of mass violence as an intentional violent crime that results in physical, emotional, or psychological injury to a large number of people and significantly increases the burden of victim assistance for the responding jurisdiction.

The Pima County Attorney's Victim Services Division has been the recognized leader in victim response for more than 35 years, and since the January 8th shooting, Victims Services has worked to coordinate response services with victims, witnesses, and numerous agencies.

LaWall, who made the announcement during *National Victim's Rights Week* (April 10-16), said "With the support of these funds Victim Services staff will be better able to meet the widespread needs of the victims and witnesses of this tragedy."

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