



April 25, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

As you consider appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, we the undersigned 87 members of the Invest in Us Coalition, representing national, state, and local violence prevention organizations, write to ask you to provide \$750 million for Community Violence Intervention (CVI) initiatives in your FY 2023 legislation. It is vital that Congress provide \$750 million for CVI initiatives to be split evenly between the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and the Department of Health and Human Services's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Injury Prevention Division. Specifically, we recommend providing \$375 million to the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative administered by OJP as well as providing \$375 million to the CDC's Youth Violence Prevention program to establish a new community violence initiative within their existing program.

Gun violence rates have soared across the nation since 2020, with cities reporting record numbers of gun homicides in 2021.¹ 2020 marked a 15 percent increase in gun deaths - with more than 45,000 gun deaths reported by the CDC, the spike largely fueled by gun homicide numbers. Troublingly, experts anticipate 2021 data will continue the deadly trend. This crisis is particularly devastating for communities of color who are disproportionately impacted by community violence and demands a dramatic response.

Gun violence in America costs the U.S. economy an estimated \$280 billion a year,² and the Biden-Harris Administration has recognized the important and unique role CVI programs play in violence reduction efforts by calling for a \$5 billion investment through the American Jobs Plan.³

Due to the severe impact of the gun violence crisis, there is an urgent need for dedicated federal funding to support this lifesaving work. The Invest in Us Coalition strongly believes that establishing dedicated CVI programs within both the DOJ and CDC is critical as it would enable federal funding to address community violence as a threat to both public safety and public health. Both OJP and CDC are authorized to establish CVI initiatives. The Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus appropriations bill invested \$50 million to

¹"Fueled by Gun Violence, Cities across the US Are Breaking All-Time Homicide Records This Year." CNN, December 12, 2021. [Link](#)

²Everytown for Gun Safety, "The Economic Cost of Gun Violence." February 2021. [Link](#)

³Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Announces Comprehensive Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gun Crime and Ensure Public Safety | The White House, 2022. [Link](#)

establish the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative within OJP, creating a dedicated program within the DOJ to support CVI programs. As the United States moves towards public health approaches for violence prevention, it is critically important that agencies best suited to implement this approach receive dedicated funding for CVI programming. Investing in a new CVI initiative within the CDC would build upon the CDC's 20-plus years of science-based youth violence prevention efforts to establish a collaborative, community driven approach to reduce community violence in cities.

Given the elevated and sustained rates of gun violence, it is essential that the federal government take significant, meaningful action to address this public health crisis. Reversing the trend of increased gun violence will require investment in the types of evidence-informed, community-led strategies that have proven to be effective in cities such as St. Louis, MO and Detroit, MI, which were among the jurisdictions that invested robustly in CVI in 2020 and 2021 and saw decreases in gun-related homicides and injuries.⁴ The proposed funding would be a targeted, specific investment in America's most impacted communities that are continuing to suffer from unacceptably high levels of gun violence in the absence of dedicated funding to support community-led violence reduction initiatives. A necessary public health and safety investment, a \$750 million investment is urgently needed and timely, especially given that the initial investments through American Rescue Plan funds have expanded the CVI field and relevant federal agencies, including the CDC, have continued to increase their capacity to support this work.⁵ However, without continued and scaled-up funding through annual appropriations, the CVI field will not be able to perform this life-saving work.

The CVI Initiatives within DOJ and CDC should prioritize funding for cities with high rates and levels of gun violence and within those cities, to community-based violence intervention strategies which are informed by public health models and provide culturally competent, trauma-responsive services to individuals and communities impacted by gun violence. These evidence-informed strategies are proven to reduce gun violence, shift community norms, and improve the outcomes and resiliency of gun violence survivors.⁶ The funding would support the implementation and sustainability of program models such as:

- [Strategic Workforce Programs](#)
- [Street Outreach Intervention](#)
- [Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs](#)
- [Safe Passage](#)
- [Group Violence Intervention](#)
- [Victim and Survivor Services](#) including: housing support, financial assistance, reentry services, legal assistance, and trauma counseling, among others.

Expanding the federal investment in CVI initiatives is critical to the lifesaving work being done in communities through evidence-based strategies to reduce violence.

Sincerely,

⁴ As Killings Rise in Many Cities, St. Louis Sees Big Decline, U.S. News. Jan 13, 2022. [Link](#); Report: Detroit Homicides, Nonfatal Shootings Drop in 2021, U.S. News. Jan 6, 2022. [Link](#).

⁵ CDC has posted two CVI related research grant opportunities (\$14.4 million (RFA-CE-22-005) and \$24.2 million (RFA-CE-22-013)) and two CVI related grant opportunity forecasts for programmatic grants (\$375 million (CDC-RFA-CE22-2207)) and training and technical assistance (\$60 million (CDC-RFA-CE22-2208)).

⁶ Caterina G. Roman et al., "Philadelphia CeaseFire: Findings from the Impact Evaluation," Key Findings Research Summary (Temple University, January 2017); Catherine Juillard et al., "Saving Lives and Saving Money: Hospital- Based Violence Intervention Is Cost-Effective," Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery 78, no. 2 (February 2015): 252–58, <https://doi.org/10.1097/TA.0000000000000527>.

AMC Unity
Advocates for Peace and Urban Unity
Alliance for Gun Responsibility
American Federation of Teachers
Amnesty International USA
Black New Mexico Movement
Brady
Circle of Brotherhood
Cities United
City of Richmond's Office of Neighborhood Safety
Clutch The World
Color of Change
CommonSpirit Health
Community Justice Action Fund
CT Against Gun Violence
DC Area Interfaith Gun Violence Prevention Network
Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence
Detours Mentoring Group Inc
Equal Justice USA
Everytown for Gun Safety
Episcopal Peace Fellowship
Faith in Action Alabama
Faith in Action Nevada
Faith in Florida
Faith in New Jersey
Faith in New York
Faith in Texas
Faith in the Valley
Gangstas Making Astronomical Community Changes Inc.
Giffords
Gun Violence Prevention PAC
Heartland Alliance
Healing 4 Our Families & Our Nation
House of Refuge COGIC/Refuge Cares
Hudson Partnership CMO
Jewish Women International
Joint Action Committee
Law Enforcement Action Partnership
Life Camp, Inc.
Live Free USA
Live Free Illinois
Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches
MA Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence
March for Our Lives
Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence
McAllister Consultancy & Training (MC&T)
Memphis Artists for Change
Michigan Faith in Action
Missouri Faith Voices
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform
National PTA
Nashville Peacemakers
Newtown Action Alliance
New Yorkers Against Gun Violence
North Carolinians Against Gun Violence
Not Another Child Inc
Not My Generation
One Aim Illinois
Peacemakers of Faith in Action Alabama
Prevention Institute
Prophetic Resistance Boston
Roca Maryland
Sacramento Area Congregations Together
Sacramento Black Clergy Fellowship
Sandy Hook Promise
Seeds & Berries
Survivors Empowered
St. Marks Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill Gun Violence Prevention Committee
Stop Handgun Violence
Teach 1
Temple Sinai (DC) Gun Violence Prevention Group
Texas Gun Sense
The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention
The Green Outreach Group
The Southern California Ceasefire Committee
The Union for Reform Judaism
UC Davis Violence Prevention Research Program
UNITEEE Violence and Incarceration Prevention
Urban Peace Institute
Violent Crime Survivors
VOICE Buffalo
WAVE Educational Fund
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