GIFFORDS LAW CENTER
TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

MEMORANDUM

TO Interested Parties
FROM Giffords Law Center
DATE April 24, 2019
RE Violence Intervention and Prevention Efforts Across the States

SUMMARY

Gun violence is by far the largest driver of homicides in America, the overwhelming majority of which—over 70%—are committed with a gun. This violence takes the form of day-to-day shootings that disproportionately impact underserved communities of color. Fortunately, there are a number of highly effective intervention and prevention strategies that directly address the root causes of gun violence. Below we take a look at seven different states around the country that would benefit from implementing similar strategies to Oakland Ceasefire, highlighting how interpersonal gun violence affects each of them and why it's never been more urgent for others to take action.

CALIFORNIA

In 2017, there were over 2,000 murders in the state of California, more than 70% of which were committed with a firearm.[i] Violence in the state is concentrated geographically, with more than half of all homicides occurring in just 12 of California's 460+ municipalities.[ii] Gun violence in California, as in many other states, also has a disparate impact on people of color. Black men ages 18–24 are over 18 times more likely than white men the same age to be murdered with a gun in California.[iii]

To combat shootings and gun homicides, California has invested $9.2 million in a competitive state grant program called CalVIP. While certain cities in California, like Oakland, Los Angeles, Stockton, and Richmond, have implemented highly effective violence reduction initiatives, the state has provided only minimal investments in these approaches. This year, Giffords is helping to lead efforts to make California a national model in investing in violence intervention by quadrupling state funding for CalVIP, and passing legislation that provides violence prevention services through Medicaid to gunshot patients at high risk for violent reinjury.

COLORADO

While Colorado's gun homicide rate is below the national average, a handful of cities struggle with a disproportionate share of the state's shootings and killings. In 2017, over two-thirds of the 175 homicides in Colorado occurred in just three cities: Denver, Aurora, and Colorado Springs.[iv] This violence has an inordinate impact on communities of color. Black men in Colorado ages 18–24 are nearly 13 times more likely than white men the same age to be murdered with a gun.[v]

These cities and the state leaders should explore implementing and expanding the evidence-based strategies that have made an impact in Oakland.

ILLINOIS

With 934 firearm-involved homicides in 2017, Illinois had the 6th-highest gun homicide rate in the country.[vi] Gun violence in Illinois is highly concentrated in the city of Chicago, which saw 70% of the state's homicides in 2017.[vii] As in many states, firearm violence disproportionately impacts people of color. Black men make up just 7% of the state's population but 72% of gun homicide victims.[viii] In Illinois, black men ages 18–24 are 61 times more likely than white men the same age to be murdered with a gun.[ix]

The state has responded to the crisis in its cities by funding Cure Violence Illinois and, as of 2018, the Community Based Violence Intervention and Prevention (CBVIP) program. The state has been the principal source of funding for Cure Violence Illinois since 2004, but due to a series of budgetary disputes, the program has suffered from a number of funding lapses, site closures, and service disruptions. For fiscal year 2018–2019 the state of Illinois appropriated $6.1 million for Cure Violence Illinois and an additional $7 million for the implementation and operation of the CBVIP grant program. While this investment is critical, it's also vital that leaders in Illinois provide sustained funding streams and prioritize the neighborhoods most impacted by gun violence to begin to address gun violence in Chicago.

MARYLAND

On average, Maryland endures a total of 313 gun-related homicides and 825 nonfatal shootings per year.[x] As of 2017, Maryland has the fifth-highest rate of gun homicide in the country. Interpersonal gun violence in Maryland is overwhelmingly concentrated in cities, especially Baltimore, which in 2018 alone experienced 273 gun homicides and 679 nonfatal shootings.[xi] In 2018, Giffords and a broad coalition of gun violence prevention and social justice organizations successfully advocated for the creation of the Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIPP) grant program, which has already invested $4 million in public health-based approaches to violence in Maryland's cities.

MISSOURI

In 2017, the state of Missouri had the 4th-highest homicide rate in the country, with 564 homicides.[xii] Shootings and homicides in the state are largely concentrated in St. Louis and Kansas City, where over 70% of homicides in the state occurred in 2017.[xiii] In fact, the city of St. Louis has one of the most severe gun violence problems in the country. In four of the last five years for which data is available, the city of St. Louis has had the highest gun homicide rate of any major city in the country.[xiv] This violence also has a disproportionate impact on young men of color. Black men make up just 6% of Missouri's population, but account for nearly 62% of the state's gun homicide victims.[xv] In fact, black men ages 18–24 are 38 times more likely to be murdered with a gun in Missouri than white men the same age.[xvi] Missouri should take action to reduce gun violence in its cities by investing in violence intervention strategies as Oakland has.

NORTH CAROLINA

In 2017, law enforcement in North Carolina reported a total 353 homicides, more than half of which occurred in just five cities.[xvii] Nearly one-quarter of this violence occurred in the city of Charlotte alone.[xviii] As is the case in many cities struggling with interpersonal violence, shootings

in North Carolina's cities disproportionately impact communities of color. Black men make up less than 11% of North Carolina's population, but account for nearly 58% of the state's gun homicide victims.[xix] To address gun crime in North Carolina, the state should build on existing violence intervention and prevention programs in Highpoint and Durham, and replicate these effective models in other communities.

WISCONSIN

While the gun homicide rate in Wisconsin is lower than the national average, shootings and gun homicides take a particularly harsh toll on the city of Milwaukee, where nearly three-quarters of homicides in the state took place in 2017.[xx] Gun violence in Wisconsin also takes a disproportionate toll on communities of color. While black men make up less than 4% of the state's population, nearly 60% of gun homicide victims in the state are black.[xxi] To address gun crime in Wisconsin, the state should consider investing in violence intervention and prevention programs in Milwaukee and other disproportionately impacted communities.

CONCLUSION

The sampling of states above represents a small slice of communities impacted by interpersonal gun violence in this country. Densely populated urban centers across the nation struggle to address the scourge of shootings and killings in their communities. However, a select number of community, city, and law enforcement leaders in states like California, Illinois, and Maryland have come together to address the underlying causes of interpersonal violence. By focusing on those at highest risk for involvement in gun violence—as victims, perpetrators, or both—cities are demonstrating that cycles of violence in impacted communities can be disrupted through evidence-driven intervention and prevention.

[i] Fatal injury data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports (www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html).

[ii] Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[iii] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.

[iv] Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[v] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.

[vi] Fatal firearm injury data and gun homicide rank came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports (www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html).

[vii] Calculated using FBI Uniform Crime Reports. Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[viii] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.

[ix] Id.

[x] Fatal firearm injury data came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports (www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html). Non-fatal firearm injuries came from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's HCUPnet Query System (https://hcupnet.ahrq.gov/#setup).

[xi] "Victim Based Crime Data," Baltimore Police Department, accessed July 26, 2017, https://data.baltimorecity.gov/Public-Safety/BPD-Part-1-Victim-Based-Crime-Data/wsfq-mvij.

[xii] Fatal firearm injury data and gun homicide rank came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports (www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html).

[xiii] Calculated using FBI Uniform Crime Reports. Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[xiv] Id.

[xv] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.

[xvi] Id.

[xvii] Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[xviii] Id.

[xix] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.

[xx] Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2017, Table 8, https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s.

[xxi] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), "Compressed Mortality File, 2013-2017," last accessed April 22, 2019, https://wonder.cdc.gov/.