

May 7, 2019

California Governor Gavin Newsom  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor Newsom, Senate President Atkins, and Speaker Rendon:

America is in the midst of a gun violence crisis that devastates tens of thousands of families each year. But Californians have so often led our nation in the fight for gun safety and demonstrated that there are lifesaving solutions to this crisis. We need leaders to continue to act and lead on this issue.

This year, Giffords has been proud to help lead a coalition of nearly three dozen organizations that came together around a top priority and a common goal: to make California *the* national leader in investing in violence prevention. I urge you to make this goal a reality by providing at least \$39 million annually to the California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) grant program for at least three years.

Over the past few decades, California has transformed itself from one of the most violent states in the nation to one of the safest. A child in California is now half as likely to die from a gunshot wound compared to the national average.

Yet our work is far from over. Thousands of Californians are shot every year. Communities of color are particularly impacted by these tragedies. Nationally, violence is responsible for *half* of all young black men's deaths—killing as many as every other cause of death combined. That is a moral outrage that we must not stand for. California can and should do more to ensure that every family can live without fear of losing a loved one to gun violence.

We know how to solve this crisis. New York and Massachusetts have achieved remarkable reductions in shootings by investing in violence intervention programs. In California, cities like Oakland, Los Angeles, and Richmond have implemented some of the most effective community-based violence intervention initiatives in the nation.

These programs focus on the small number of individuals at highest risk for violence in their communities in order to interrupt dangerous cycles of violence, trauma, and retaliation. Through [multiple](#) in-depth [reports](#), public events, and legislative testimony, Giffords has worked to highlight and support these communities' successes—success made possible by funding from CalVIP.

That's why I am calling on California's leaders to fund a groundbreaking expansion of the CalVIP grant program, and do what you do best on this issue: lead.

Sincerely,

Gabby Giffords