

# THE VITAL ROLE OF COALITIONS IN THE MOVEMENT TO END COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Contrary to the national narrative about crime and violence, several US cities achieved decades-low levels of homicides and shootings in 2024. These reductions came after a historic national investment in community violence intervention (CVI) programs, which work by directing services to high-risk individuals, effectively breaking cycles of violence and trauma.

**Local, state, and national CVI coalitions—composed of frontline CVI workers, policymakers, advocacy organizations, survivors, healthcare workers, law enforcement officials, and others—were essential to driving this significant investment. CVI coalitions continue to play a vital role in developing community-based public safety ecosystems around the country through accountability, advocacy, community building, and education.**

Just a few years ago, there were almost no CVI coalitions anywhere in the country; now, there are more than a dozen. In order to build on this momentum, the CVI movement should follow the coalition building practices and diverse funding strategies of the movement to address domestic and sexual violence, which leveraged coalitions to achieve one of America's great policy success stories: the change in national attitudes and laws regarding domestic and sexual violence, and the corresponding drop in levels of both in recent decades.

CVI coalitions have already accomplished big wins. The Los Angeles Violence Intervention Coalition, the CalVIP Coalition, and Invest in Us have, respectively, secured a minimum wage for the CVI workforce in Los Angeles, enacted the nation's first state tax on the sale of guns and ammunition to fund CVI work, and pushed the federal government to make the largest-ever investment in CVI work.

**Public and private support for coalition growth is necessary to the movement to end community violence.** Policymakers in both parties and at all levels of government, as well as private funders, should encourage CVI coalitions to develop and thrive.

**Despite recent cuts in federal grants for public safety, progress is still possible. Now more than ever, local leaders and the private sector must rise to the occasion as the stewards of community-based public safety.**

## **WE ARE PROUD TO OFFER A NEW RESOURCE FOR STATE-LEVEL ADVOCATES: THE STATE CVI COALITION ALLIANCE (SCCA)**

SCCA's mission is to foster coalition growth by building networks, sharing best practices, and creating informational materials for public consumption. To find out if there is a state CVI coalition in your home state, you can contact the SCCA at [sccainformation@gmail.com](mailto:sccainformation@gmail.com).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

America must better support CVI coalition development as part of a broader strategy for reducing community violence in the US. There are many steps that leaders in the public and private sectors can take to help facilitate the continued development and expansion of CVI coalitions.

### FOR POLICYMAKERS:

- **Congress should pass legislation that affirms a federal commitment to reducing community violence**, including through coalition building, and begin a pilot program to certify and support an initial cohort of state CVI coalitions.
- **States should fund community violence coalitions with line-item appropriations** in the same way that many are already funding domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions.
- Governors can take steps to **incentivize both private investment in CVI as well as state agency coordination** with CVI coalitions.

### FOR PHILANTHROPIES AND CORPORATIONS:

- Private funders should **invest in CVI as part of a broader strategy to improve the health of American communities**. In doing so, private funders should look to specifically support the growth and expansion of CVI coalitions as a way of strengthening the overall field.
- Private funders should also **expand their impact by creating regionally focused funding collectives**, such as Chicago's Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities and the Commercial Club of Chicago's Public Safety Taskforce, which have partnered to help attract millions of dollars to support Chicago's CVI ecosystem.
- The National CVI Action Plan is a crucial resource for private funders, as it was written with input from dozens of CVI organizations around the country and with the funding community as a primary audience. It can be found at [cviactionplan.com](http://cviactionplan.com).

### FOR ADVOCATES AND PRACTITIONERS:

- CVI and violence prevention advocates and practitioners should **add direct support for coalitions to their list of policy priorities**, and push both public and private stakeholders to increase their support for CVI coalition building efforts.
- Advocates and practitioners should also **seek out and join CVI coalitions where they already exist** and continue to educate lawmakers on the vital role that coalitions play in improving the efficacy of the field.
- If there isn't a CVI coalition in your state and/or region, **it's time to think about getting one started**. To find out if there is a state CVI coalition in your home state, you can contact the SCCA at [sccainformation@gmail.com](mailto:sccainformation@gmail.com).

**CONNECT WITH US BY EMAILING [GCVI@GIFFORDS.ORG](mailto:GCVI@GIFFORDS.ORG)**

GIFFORDS Center for Violence Intervention champions the lifesaving work of community organizations and the strategies that break cycles of gun violence. We aim to bring existing intervention practitioners together to exchange best practices, build relationships, and secure resources to shore up and expand violence intervention work nationwide.