Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Marty Isaac, Board President, CT Against Gun Violence, Trumbull CT

Testimony re: H.B. 7148 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIAL ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2021, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

Office of Policy Management: Fully Fund Project Longevity

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Marty Isaac and I am Board President of Connecticut Against Gun Violence. I am here today to impress upon you the critical need to fully fund the Project Longevity program.

For those of you that are not familiar with Project Longevity, it’s a program based on the concept of focused deterrence and group accountability and its goal is to reduce gun violence in our inner cities. It is remarkably effective. The program was launched in 2012 – and since that time, gun homicides in our major cities have decreased dramatically.

Specifically, in 2010 and 2011, in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven, there was a total of 70 and 75 homicides respectively. In the past two years, that total decreased to 47 and 37 homicides respectively – a reduction of over 40 percent!

Project Longevity is based on the Group Violence Reduction Strategy developed by the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. The research behind the
strategy found that violence in troubled neighborhoods is caused predominantly by a small number of people, typically less than 0.5 percent of a city’s population, in specific identifiable groups (not gangs; these groups tend to be non-hierarchical and not formally organized).

Project Longevity has shown that violence can be reduced dramatically when community members and law enforcement join together to directly engage with these violent groups.

The data here in CT and studies, which I have included in the appendix to my testimony, back this up. For example, according to a Yale University study reported in the New Haven Register, Project Longevity was a factor in reducing nearly five gang-related shootings and homicides in New Haven every month!

A critical component of the Project Longevity strategy is the “call-in,” a face-to-face meeting where partners engage group members and deliver a 3-part message.

- First, that group members are part of a community, that gun violence is unacceptable and that the community needs it to end.
- Second, that help is available to all who will accept it. Social service providers are standing by to assist with educational, employment, housing, medical, mental health and other needs.
- Third, that any future violence will be met with clear and certain consequences. The next time a homicide is traced to any member of a violent group, all members of that group will receive comprehensive law enforcement attention to any and all crimes any of its members are committing.

As these rules become understood by the neighborhood, behavior changes – swiftly. Rapid reduction in crime is not unique to Connecticut.
Other cities have implemented Focused Deterrence programs and have obtained similar results.

What happens if funding is not maintained? We don’t have to guess; Chicago provides a strong case study. They stopped funding their version of focused deterrence, Ceasefire, and the aftermath was brutal -- and predictable.

- After a 2007 interruption in funding the program shut down 15 sites and shootings spiked. Funding was restored a year later — and violence returned to its previous level.

- Following a suspension in March 2015 of the $4.5 state million grant that represented most of the funding to CeaseFire Illinois, the relationship between funding and gun violence became even more clear; the only one of Chicago's 22 police districts to experience a reduction in shootings happened to be the only district in which CeaseFire had been able to consistently maintain its full program of operations.

I recognize that Connecticut has abundant budgetary challenges. However, not fully funding Project Longevity will exacerbate these challenges:

- Shootings will increase.
- The cost of managing this incremental crime wave will far outpace the cost savings.
- And most certainly, additional lives will be lost.

I appreciate your time this evening. I kindly request that you fully fund Project Longevity.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, November 27, 2012

Project Longevity Launched to Reduce Gang and Gun Violence in Connecticut’s Cities

Government Officials, Community Members, Service Providers and Law Enforcement Join Forces in Statewide Anti-Violence Initiative

Attorney General Eric Holder, U.S. Attorney David Fein and Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy joined members of law enforcement, public officials, social service providers, community leaders and researchers in New Haven today to launch “Project Longevity,” a comprehensive initiative to reduce gun violence in Connecticut’s major cities. Project Longevity uses a strategy that has shown violence can be reduced dramatically when community members and law enforcement join together to directly engage with these groups and clearly communicate a community message against violence, a law enforcement message about the consequences of further violence and an offer of help for those who want it. To accomplish this, law enforcement, social service providers and community members are recruited, assembled and trained to engage in a sustained relationship with violent groups.

"Project Longevity will send a powerful message to those who would commit violent crimes targeting their fellow citizens that such acts will not be tolerated and that help is available for all those who wish to break the cycle of violence and gang activity," said Attorney General Holder. "Today's announcement underscores our commitment to working together -- across levels of government and jurisdictional boundaries -- to protect the American people from the crime that threatens too many neighborhoods and claims far too many innocent lives."

Project Longevity is based on a model that has been successful in reducing gun violence in multiple neighborhoods across the country and represents the first time the strategy is being implemented statewide.

"On the state level, I have directed my administration to focus our criminal justice resources on urban violence," Governor Malloy said. "We agree that no strategy will be effective without the support of the community. This means parents, clergy, neighborhood leaders, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles -- everyone working toward one goal. We are working to regain the trust of the African American and Latino communities. We need their help. The lives of these young people are too valuable not to act."

Funded by federal, state and local sources, Project Longevity is being launched initially in three Connecticut cities — New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport.
“After more than a year of hard work and preparation by so many public and private partners, I am pleased to announce Project Longevity, our statewide anti-violence initiative,” said U.S. Attorney Fein. “Many dedicated people and organizations have come together to support this proven strategy to reduce gang and gun violence through focused deterrence.”

A critical component of the Project Longevity strategy is the “call-in,” a face-to-face meeting where partners engage group members and deliver certain key messages. First, that group members are part of a community, that gun violence is unacceptable and that the community needs it to end. Second, that help is available to all who will accept it in order to transition out of the gang lifestyle, and that social service providers are standing by to assist with educational, employment, housing, medical, mental health and other needs. Third, that any future violence will be met with clear and certain consequences. The next time a homicide is traced to any member of a violent group, all members of that group will receive increased and comprehensive law enforcement attention to any and all crimes any of its members are committing.

Yesterday, the first call-ins of two groups were convened in New Haven. At the call-ins, approximately 25 individuals heard the Project Longevity message from senior leadership of the New Haven Police Department, federal and state prosecutors, outreach workers and other members of the New Haven community. One Project Longevity participant, Adult Education Director for the New Haven Board of Education Alicia Carballo, spoke about losing her 24-year-old son when he was shot and killed in New Haven in April 2008.

Project Longevity is based on the Group Violence Reduction Strategy developed by the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. The research behind the strategy, which was first implemented in Boston as “Operation Ceasefire” in the mid-1990s, has found that violence in troubled neighborhoods is caused predominantly by a small number of people who are members of street gangs, drug crews and other identified groups. These groups, whose members typically constitute less than 0.5 percent of a city’s population, often have little organization, hierarchy or common purpose, and commit violent acts primarily for personal reasons, not to achieve any economic gain or other advantage. The Group Violence Reduction Strategy, which also has been deployed in areas of Chicago, Cincinnati, Providence, R.I., and elsewhere, has resulted in a 40 to 60 percent reduction in group-related homicides in certain neighborhoods. After Project Longevity is established in Hartford and Bridgeport, the program may be deployed in other Connecticut cities if research and data analysis of a city’s homicide rate determine that the model offers an appropriate solution to gun violence.

The Rev. William Mathis has been appointed as Project Longevity’s New Haven Program Manager. The Rev. Mathis is also the Pastor of Springs of Life-Giving Water Church in New Haven, an attorney, a former prosecutor and an adjunct professor at Quinnipiac University and the University of New Haven. As program manager, the Rev. Mathis is responsible for developing effective and sustainable working relationships between law enforcement, service providers and community members to insure Project Longevity’s success.

The organizational structure of Project Longevity in New Haven includes a Governing Board, Strategy and Implementation Team, Research Team, Law Enforcement Team, Community Service Provider Team and Community Engagement Team, all of which meet regularly. Project Longevity’s Governing Board includes: U.S. Attorney Fein, Governor Malloy, State Senator Toni Harp, State Representative Toni
Walker, New Haven Mayor John DeStefano, New Haven Alderperson Jorge Perez, New Haven State’s Attorney Michael Deearington, Court Support Services Executive Director William Carbone, Connecticut Department of Correction Commissioner Leo Arnone, Director of the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice David Kennedy, and Yale University’s Vice President for New Haven and State Affairs and Campus Development Bruce Alexander.

The Strategy and Implementation Team is co-chaired by New Haven Police Chief Dean Esserman and New Haven businessman Howard Hill, and includes members of law enforcement, service providers, researchers and the community. Chief Esserman has previously partnered with the Center for Crime Prevention and Control to implement a similar strategy when he served as police chief in Providence. Several community and business leaders in New Haven, as well as members of the New Haven Clergy Association, are also actively involved in Project Longevity. In order to assist identified individual transition from a destructive gang lifestyle, Project Longevity has engaged nine service providers in the New Haven area, including Children’s Community Program of Connecticut, Community Service Administration for the City of New Haven, Consultation Center (Yale), Gateway Community College, Elm City Communities, New Haven Family Alliance, Project Model Offender Reintegration Experience (M.O.R.E.), Workforce Alliance/CT Works and United Way of Greater New Haven. The University of New Haven, Yale University and the University of Cincinnati are working with law enforcement to collect and analyze crime data and provide research support to identify the groups and individuals that will be contacted through Project Longevity. Many of these individuals are already known to law enforcement and/or are under the supervision of probation or parole officers.

Other participating Justice Department agencies in Project Longevity include: the FBI; Drug Enforcement Administration; the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the U.S. Marshals Service.
Watch the news and you’ll see cities across the country grappling with the division between law enforcement and communities of color, and some even seeing spikes in homicide after years of decline. Meanwhile, Project Longevity in New Haven is a reminder that we actually know what works when it comes to bringing police and communities together and cutting violent crime. A recent study shows the initiative has reduced homicides and shootings, and it has received high-level support on the national stage. On a recent visit to New Haven, FBI Director James Comey identified Project
Longevity as a national model. “I think Project Longevity shows what can happen when law enforcement and a community come together and come up with solutions to problems jointly that are plaguing the neighborhoods,” Comey said. So what is New Haven doing right?

Project Longevity — supported by the state of Connecticut, Yale professors Tracey Meares and Andrew Papachristos, and the University of New Haven — is based on a model with a long track record, in many different settings around the nation, of effectively reducing violence. It has unparalleled results in formal evaluations, earning it the highest evidence-based rating from the Department of Justice’s CrimeSolutions.gov. A brand-new meta-analysis by a pair of Harvard researchers said of the approach that it “has the largest direct impact on crime and violence, by far, of any intervention in this report.” And it’s working in the streets of New Haven. A recent study out of Yale University found that in the three years since Project Longevity’s implementation, shootings among the highest-risk population in the city have dropped almost 73 percent per month on average. Papachristos, one of the evaluation’s authors, called the approach an example of “community policing and service providers actually (coming) together and (doing) a lot of good.” Another promising indicator is that gunfire itself has declined: a recent report based on the ShotSpotter system covering part of the city found a 38.5 percent drop in incidents between 2014 and 2015 — the second-largest of 46 cities analyzed nationally.

Originally developed in Boston as “Operation Ceasefire,” and now used in scores of cities, some supported directly by my organization, the National Network for Safe Communities, Project Longevity is based on the reality that serious violence is highly concentrated. As in other cities nationally, more than half of New Haven’s homicides and shootings are driven by less than one percent of its population, primarily members of street groups — gangs, drug crews and the like. Since those groups are at enormously elevated risk of violent victimization or offending, focusing on them can drive violence down dramatically. The strategy relies on a strong partnership of community members, social service providers, and law enforcement, who speak directly to group members at “call-in” meetings, make it crystal clear that the community cares about them but rejects violence, and make them a promise: we’ll help you if you let us, and we’ll stop you if you make us. When the streets believe the new rules are real, they respond: violence goes down, and the number of group members who take advantage of the help offered goes up. New Haven has kept its promise on both counts: those who have asked for help have gotten it — including housing, emergency support, job training, educational placement, and the like — and groups that have killed have received the full attention of law enforcement. New Haven has also begun using what we call “custom notifications,” an innovative national practice that has police commanders, along with community representatives and service providers, pay home visits to men believed to be involved in street disputes or whose criminal records place them at high risk for victimization, let them know their legal risk, and offer them support.

This is just as profound and transformative as it sounds. New Haven Police Chief Dean Esserman, like other leading edge police executives across the country, knows from experience that policing communities in ways they experience as disrespectful and abusive — and that burden neighborhoods with the permanent damage of high levels of
arrest, incarceration, and criminal records — alienates those communities and does not necessarily reduce violence. A sincere believer in work that addresses crime seriously and fairly, Esserman has been instrumental in making the shift toward a focused, community-based approach that not only reduces violence but also strengthens perceptions of police legitimacy — a critically important step, since we know that where legitimacy goes up, crime goes down. This work has led to an unprecedented interagency working relationship between multiple units of the New Haven Police Department; police departments from surrounding towns; state police; ATF, FBI, and DEA; the Department of Correction; probation and parole; the U.S. attorney’s office; and the state attorney’s office. These agencies meet routinely to focus on the small core population driving violence in order to keep them safe, address the community’s most pressing safety concerns, and head off immediate threats of violence.

With this work, New Haven joins a growing number of cities — including New Orleans, Chicago, Oakland and many others — committed to improving public safety while at the same time rebuilding fractured relationships between law enforcement and communities. Most encouraging is that Project Longevity is not a success for New Haven alone. At a time when the nation’s attention is properly focused on the effects of mass incarceration and criminal justice system overreach, this strategy points the way forward for other communities suffering from daily violence, and where street stops, arrest, and imprisonment remain far too common. Much work remains, but it is by far our best route to strengthening communities to set their own public safety standards, narrowing the net of law enforcement, and keeping the most vulnerable population alive and out of prison.

David M. Kennedy is professor of criminal justice and director of the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. He is working with New Haven on Project Longevity.
NEW HAVEN >> As 2017 begins, statistics on last year’s shootings continue to show that crime has been decreasing in New Haven since 2011 and Assistant Chief of Police Archie Generoso said it’s a result of community policing efforts.

“The difference is how we police here now, we’re doubling our community policing efforts, we’re working with all our partners to keep crime down and it’s working,” Generoso said.

The numbers of homicides, non-fatal shootings, and shots fired have been consistently lower since 2011. Generoso said the real indicator of violence is not homicides, it’s total shootings and shots fired. Records show, that between 2003 and 2012, the city we averaged 126 total shootings a year. The average from 2013 to 2016 was 63.

“That’s half,” Generoso said. “We’ve been able to cut that in half.”

Records of shots fired only go back to 2011. That year there were around 450 “shots fired” complaints, which includes using technology to detect them. Since then, the New Haven Police Department has expanded its Shotspotter program, which uses audio sensors and triangulation to determine the location of gunfire. Earlier in 2016, the city increased its Shotspotter coverage area by three times, placing the technology in neighborhoods with the highest number of such crimes. Even with that expansion, the number of reported shots fired only went up to an average of 150.

“We’re keeping the level of violence down, there’s a consistency in that, we’re showing now, we have a 4-year stat showing that,” Generoso said.

Programs such Project Longevity, daily intelligence meetings, CompStat, and other community policing efforts are all part of the formula that helped New Haven go from having 34 homicides in 2011, to 13 in 2016. There were 15 homicides in the city in 2015 and 13 homicides in 2014.

Project Longevity features customized notifications, which is when Project Manager Stacy R. Spell and other community members visit the homes of teens who are at risk of being victims or perpetrators of a violent crime. The program aims to work with individuals identified as being in gangs or groups who are in danger of being
perpetrators or victims of violence. They are invited to a “call in,” a sort of intervention, where services are offered as incentives not to engage in gun-related violence, including help with getting high school diplomas, driver’s licenses and housing assistance.

According to a 2015 study by Yale University sociologists, Project Longevity has had a positive impact in reducing shootings and homicides in New Haven.

“So it’s no mistake that our first call in was in 2012,” Generoso said.

Police Lt. Herb Johnson said he is very proud about the numbers this year and looks forward to reducing crime even more in 2017.

“It doesn’t happen with just us, it’s a great collaborative effort. When all the wheels are turning together that’s when we strive, and with the community as well,” Johnson said. “I’m looking forward to the new year, we’re going to have some changes, we got a lot of work to continue to do year, but we have great young talent here.”

In addition to preventative measures, the Police Department also continues to aggressively investigate shootings and homicides, both to seek justice and bring closure to grieving families.

Of the 13 homicides in New Haven this year, 10 were victims of shootings and 12 were under the age of 36. Two victims were stabbed, and one was strangled. There were arrests made in two of the cases and the others remain open investigations.
Forum: Project Longevity is working

By David Kennedy

Published 1:30 pm EDT, Tuesday, March 20, 2018

As an article published last December in the Register detailed, New Haven saw fewer homicides in 2017 — seven — than in any year since the mid-80s (official figures only go back to 1985). Former Assistant Police Chief Achilles “Archie” Generoso, who retired last month, believes that last year was the city’s safest in half a century. That progress is not an accident: it is, especially, the product of Project Longevity, an initiative to reduce gun violence in New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport.

The organizing principle of the Project Longevity strategy is simple: Even in communities with high rates of violence, only a tiny fraction of the population is at any real risk of homicides and shootings. With this principle in mind, Project Longevity has assembled a partnership of law enforcement personnel, community representatives, and social service providers to directly engage the people at highest risk. Through face-to-face meetings known as “call-ins,” the partnership communicates why the violence has to stop; the potential legal consequences for continued violence; and the forms of help available to those willing to take it.

Along with call-ins, daily “intel” meetings that bring together representatives from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies have been a central component of Project Longevity’s implementation. During these meetings, the group reviews recent violent incidents in the city and devises a plan for preventing future shootings. Possible courses of action include “custom notifications” to head off retaliation; offering victims and their families support, services, and protection; and increasing law enforcement attention on particularly violent people and groups.

The results of the intel meetings, community outreach, and other Project Longevity initiatives speak for themselves: Between 2012 and 2017, homicides in New Haven
dropped by more than 70 percent. Shootings and arrests are also down significantly, according to NHPD data. Impressive on their own, these numbers cannot begin to account for the total sum of violence, trauma, and community instability that Project Longevity has helped prevent.

Project Longevity is continuing to develop community engagement in New Haven. In this spirit, Project Manager Stacy Spell is organizing a series of outreach events to take place later this year in the neighborhoods that are the focus of the initiative. Last December, the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, founded by former Congresswoman and gunshot survivor Gabrielle Giffords, proclaimed Project Longevity a national model for statewide violence prevention and “a shining example of a public safety program that is not only achieving tangible results, but also saving Connecticut taxpayers millions of dollars in healthcare, law enforcement, and other costs.” Even as the 2017 state budget crisis forced Project Longevity staff to work without pay during the latter half of the year, their dedication to their mission did not waver.

And it won’t anytime soon. The stakes are simply too high. As Generoso said, New Haven remains far from violence-free: “It’s still tragic for seven people who were killed. It’s still unacceptable that we had 60 shootings.”
Why Has Chicago Violence Skyrocketed in 2016?

The large increase in violence in Chicago in 2016 is unique, and although many factors may be involved, it is worth taking a closer look at one important factor - Cure Violence. The Cure Violence program in Chicago (known locally as CeaseFire) was dramatically cut in March 2015, the exact same time when a longterm downward trend in violence reversed and began to rapidly increase. This increase resulted in 2016 being the deadliest year in over two decades.

**Shootings Increased After Cure Violence Was Cut**

![Graph showing a decrease in shootings followed by an increase after Cure Violence was cut](image)

Cure Violence cut 14 sites to 1

Data: Official Chicago Police Department data

This has happened twice before. In all three instances state fiscal problems resulted in cuts in funding for Cure Violence programs in Chicago, and in all three instances shootings and killings immediately increased (and went down again when Cure Violence funds were restored).
In 2015-16, the 4th district -- the only district to maintain a full Cure Violence program -- was the only district in which shootings and killings declined.
Only Decrease in Violence Is Only Active Cure Violence Site

11th District
Strongest program cut.
Largest increase.

4th District
Only reduction.
Only full Cure Violence site.

It is also worth noting (see above) that the 11th district experienced the greatest increase in shootings. The 11th district was home to the largest and strongest CeaseFire program – and therefore where the reduction in effort was the greatest. (Shootings increased by nearly 170 in the 11th district over a 17-month period. Prior to the cut, the program was averaging 10 interruptions per month, which over 17 months would have been 170 mediations).

Other factors are involved as well. Policing has been under fire, the number of officers is slightly down, and mental health and other services have been cut as well. However, this data and the report linked below describe the relationships in time and place between the level of violence in Chicago and Cure Violence - and notably reveal that Cure Violence has not been in place in Chicago during the period in which the city has experienced this tremendous spike in violence.
The doctor who predicted Chicago's homicide epidemic

Chicago, the nation's third largest city, ends 2016 with more homicides than the two larger cities — New York and Los Angeles — put together. Everyone is shocked but not everyone is surprised.

More than 750 people were killed in Chicago in 2016, the highest total since 1997, and more than 4,300 were wounded by firearms.

Dr. Gary Slutkin, the University of Illinois at Chicago epidemiologist who founded the CeaseFire Illinois violence-reduction program also known as Cure Violence, warned Gov. Bruce Rauner in a March 2015 letter of a probable surge in Chicago shootings if the program's funding was not restored.

A $4.5 million grant from the state represented most of the funding for CeaseFire Illinois, which serves sites across six cities in the state, Slutkin said.

"Lives depend on this program," he wrote.

Sure, just about every social service program makes life-or-death pleas when its funding is cut. Crime rises and falls for a variety of reasons. But the doctor had some startling statistics on his side.
A look at factors driving Chicago violence as the city sees dramatic increases in the number of shooting victims and homicides. (Jemal R. Brinson / Chicago Tribune)

Slutkin had seen similar interruptions in funding precede violent crime surges in Chicago four times since CeaseFire took to Chicago streets in 2001, too often to be brushed off as mere coincidence.

After a 2007 interruption in funding by Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich, for example, the program shut down 15 sites and shootings spiked. Funding was restored a year later — and violence returned to its previous level.

Now, a similarly tragic trend has followed suspension in March 2015 of the $4.5 state million grant that represented most of the funding to CeaseFire Illinois. More than a year later, a six-month spending plan that is now expiring granted $4.4 million to CeaseFire Illinois.

Slutkin, as he told me in a telephone interview, hates to see that his prediction was right.
Now the only one of Chicago's 22 police districts to experience a reduction in shootings over the past year also happened to be the only district in which CeaseFire has been able to consistently maintain its full program of operations.

Also, having expanded to 22 other cities, including New York and Los Angeles, Cure Violence now sadly faces its biggest hurdles in Chicago, largely because, after years of overspending, the city and state governments are broke.

Republican Rauner campaigned with promises to balance the state's budget, but as governor he has insisted on including other reforms before he'll pass a budget. That has drawn fierce opposition from the state's Democratic-controlled legislature, and Illinois is now into its second year without a full budget.

As you should have guessed by now, I like the Cure Violence approach. No program is perfect, but Slutkin's approach of treating violence epidemics in much the same way that we think of conventional epidemics has proved its merits in numerous evaluations by the Justice Department and university studies.

Perhaps you saw it featured in an award-winning Kartemquin Films documentary called "The Interrupters," which can be viewed on the PBS "Frontline" website. It is worth seeing by those who are too eagerly willing to
write off high crime communities and the people who inhabit them as a lost cause. Inside every "ghetto," I argue, there's a neighborhood trying to break free.

Slutkin, a former World Health Organization official, constructed the Cure Violence program to treat violence like a contagious disease. Most violent crimes result from personal beefs. A minor personal offense quickly escalates into a violent response to save face — and possibly leads to more retaliatory violence.

Cure Violence enlists and dispatches "interrupters," including former gangbangers and other ex-offenders, like germ-fighting antibodies into high-violence neighborhoods to use their connections and street credibility to defuse potential violence before it boils over.

Done right, it encourages family members, friends, hospital workers and others who might not want to call police and have nowhere else to turn to call in the "interrupters," who try to intervene and settle the grievances peacefully.

If you wait until after police have arrived, as one interrupter put it, "it's too late."

Yet, since Cure Violence programs most effective interrupters include ex-offenders, cooperation with police tends to be at arms-length. Police sometimes complain that the interrupters aren't helping them enough and trust in police is so low in many neighborhoods that the interrupters don't want to be seen as becoming too cozy with the cops.
With more than 4,300 shootings and 750 homicides in 2016, Chicago has had the most violent year in almost two decades. Residents from three of the city's most violent neighborhoods offer their thoughts on what this increase means and what needs to be done to solve the problem. (Chicago Tribune)

As I say, no program is perfect. But there is no one-size-fits-all solution to urban violence like that faced by Chicago and smaller cities that have even higher violence rates. We need to try everything that works. CureViolence appears to have passed that test.

As for the funding challenges, we need to ask in a city that has become desensitized too often by killings of small children and other innocent bystanders, how much are the lives of our children worth? Priceless.

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