

Submitter: Amie Wexler
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

I urge you to renew Oregon's \$15 million Community Violence Intervention fund, administered by DOJ's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division, in the budget.

Last year, Oregon appropriated \$15 million to these services for the very first time, and we know there is already more demand than funding available. Funding is set to expire in 2024. If we want to reduce gun violence over the long term, we can't make a one-time investment; we have to make a sustained commitment to strategies we know work to reduce violence.

Grants support evidence-informed programs across the state of Oregon that address many different types of gun violence, from street-based outreach to reduce homicides in Multnomah County to veteran suicide prevention programs in Eastern and Southern Oregon.

I live in NE Portland and gun violence has become a bigger problem here than in previous years. We need a non-carceral response - one that prevents gun violence rather than one that tries to arrest our way out of this problem, after the gun violence has occurred. Community Violence Interruption Programs are working across the country. We know they can work in our state, too. We have to try every possible solution to this alarming and horrific problem.

Thank you for supporting these live-saving programs in the state budget.

Amie Wexler, Portland