

Hello Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Nicole Dorfman. I live in SW Portland. **As a member of Moms Demand Action, it is my privilege to urge you to renew Oregon's \$15 million Community Violence Intervention fund, which is administered by DOJ's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division, in this year's budget.**

I began my gun violence prevention journey as a box folder for the Soul Box Project which started here in Portland in 2017 after the Las Vegas shooting. I, along with my kids who were then 11 and 15 learned to fold folded boxes for each person whose life was lost from gun violence. Folding Soul Boxes has become the ultimate in **artivism**, the physical act of honoring the victims by creating a box representing their souls and saying their names. While folding together, we discuss the manner that the shooting occurred, the impact gun violence has had on the life taken and also on the families and communities affected. Over the years, as my kids grew up, we folded SO MANY MORE boxes. We couldn't keep up with the number of precious souls whose lives were senselessly lost by a **bullet**. Sadly, many of the victims were also kids whose lives were just starting.

The survivors of school shootings have learned the hard way that thoughts and prayers are simply not effective enough to deeply honor these innocent victims. As parents and caregivers, we try to teach our kids to find a solution to mistakes or issues so the unthinkable doesn't happen again. We must keep working to get this point across to our entire nation. Its simply unfair and wrong that many innocent lives are being cut short everyday in this country!

- • 2021 and 22 were among the deadliest years of gun violence in Oregon's recent history. There is an urgent need for more action on this ongoing public health crisis. State governments have a huge role to play in addressing the root causes of violence and investing in lasting solutions like violence intervention programs.
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- • Local gun violence intervention groups have continued to interrupt the cycle of gun violence in our communities, but these groups have faced unprecedented challenges. One of the most immediate things that policymakers can do is to ensure the resources will continue for this life-saving work.

You can help by renewing **Oregon's \$15 million Community Violence Intervention Fund**. Thank you for listening and acting to protect the lives of our students and neighbors.