

Submitter: Seth Kezar

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1015

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed requirement that the Department of Justice develop and implement a grant program aimed at awarding funds to eligible entities to reduce community violence in areas experiencing disproportionately high rates of such violence.

While I fully support efforts to promote public safety and reduce violence, I have serious concerns about the implications and effectiveness of this particular approach. First, it centralizes authority and funding at the federal level, potentially reducing the accountability and flexibility that local communities need to address the unique causes of violence in their areas. Community issues are often deeply rooted in local dynamics, and solutions are best crafted and implemented by those with firsthand knowledge of the challenges—not through top-down federal programs.

Moreover, grant programs are notoriously vulnerable to inefficiencies, mismanagement, and inequitable distribution. They often favor larger or more politically connected organizations, leaving smaller, grassroots entities—those most intimately involved in community work—struggling to compete for resources. This risks reinforcing existing disparities rather than resolving them.

There is also the question of fiscal responsibility. Such programs can quickly grow in scope and cost, yet measurable outcomes are not always guaranteed. We must be cautious about committing taxpayer dollars to initiatives that may lack rigorous accountability standards or proven effectiveness.

I urge lawmakers to instead focus on empowering local governments and community leaders directly through policy support, data sharing, and flexible funding mechanisms that respect local autonomy. Public safety is vital, but it must be addressed through efficient, equitable, and transparent means that reflect the diversity of our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.