



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins Announces \$1 Million in SNUG Funding to Yonkers YMCA to Strengthen Gun Violence Prevention Efforts

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS February 18, 2025

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Sen. Stewart-Cousins played a pivotal role in bringing SNUG to Yonkers; city saw 47 percent reduction in gun violence in 2024

(Yonkers, NY) – State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins proudly announces that the Yonkers YMCA has been awarded over \$1 million in SNUG funding as part of a \$20.7 million statewide investment in gun violence prevention. SNUG, a groundbreaking initiative

created in 2009, has contributed to a 28 percent reduction in gun violence statewide by taking a public health approach and focusing on community-based solutions. Stewart-Cousins has consistently fought to fund this crucial program and this \$1 million investment is the largest one-time investment since the inception of the program.

**Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said:** “When we first launched SNUG, it was based on the belief that community-driven, evidence-based solutions in cooperation with local police are key to stopping gun violence before it starts. The state’s continued and growing investment in the Yonkers SNUG program is a testament to the program's success. I will continue advocating for strong investments in public safety initiatives that make Westchester and all of New York a safer place for everyone.”

In 2009, Stewart-Cousins played a pivotal role in creating this groundbreaking program and bringing it to Yonkers. Under her leadership, the Senate Majority has taken bold, proactive steps to keep New Yorkers safe - including implementing New York’s first red flag laws, support municipal gun buyback programs, enhanced background check, banned bump stocks, raised the age, and invested in numerous community and youth programs to support proactive, preventative safety with the intent of stopping crime before it starts. This approach has helped reduce gun violence in New York State by 47 percent since 2021, proving that community-driven solutions save lives.

**Yonkers YMCA SNUG Program Manager Peter Thompson said:** “This funding is vital to our mission of reducing gun violence in Yonkers. It allows us to expand our programs, support those most at risk, and create a safer community for everyone. We are grateful for Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins’ and Governor Hochul’s continued support.”

The impact of New York’s gun violence prevention efforts is evident, with communities participating in the state’s Gun Involved Violence (GIVE) initiative reporting record-low

shooting incidents in 2024, according to reports from DCJS. Statewide, shooting incidents with injuries declined by 28 percent, while Yonkers saw a decrease of 47 percent, among the sharpest reductions anywhere in the state. This downward trend demonstrates the success of sustained investments in SNUG and other comprehensive crime prevention strategies that continue to make a real difference in communities across the state.

“We, the Yonkers SNUG family, extend our deepest gratitude to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Governor Kathy Hochul for their unwavering support and commitment to the inner-city community. The SNUG program plays a vital role in reducing gun violence in Yonkers, and this funding will allow us to continue our life-saving work,” **SNUG Representatives said.** “With these resources, we can guide our youth away from the streets, expose them to new opportunities, and help them build brighter futures. We are truly grateful for this investment in our community and remain dedicated to making a lasting impact.”