



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

## NEWS: 2021-22 Budget Establishes Funding for Gun Violence Prevention

ZELLNOR MYRIE April 6, 2021

| ISSUE: GUN VIOLENCE, 2021-2022 STATE BUDGET

**HUGE VICTORY!**

State Sen. Zellnor Myrie takes on the rise in gun violence

We Need a Crisis-level Response: Myrie, Richardson Call on State to Cough Up More Anti-Gun Violence Funding

NY Lawmakers Seek To Create A "Predictable Funding Stream" For Anti-Violence Programs

The gun industry is killing Black America. It's time we do something about it

ICYMI: New York lawmakers float a plan for more consistent violence interruption funding. In our weekly newsletter (get it by updating your

The **Community Violence Intervention Act** supports hospital- and community- based violence intervention programs with the resources they need to **stop the cycle of gun violence.**

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**The CVIA Passes!**

**ZELLNOR MYRIE**

**ALBANY**— In a major victory in the fight to prevent gun violence, Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie (D-Central Brooklyn) today announced that the Community Violence Intervention Act was adopted as part of the 2021-22 State Budget. In an historic statement, New York became the first state to officially declare gun violence a public health crisis, and is responding accordingly by establishing a fund for violence intervention and interruption programs that serve our communities.

“Today, we are sending an unmistakable message: gun violence is an epidemic in communities across New York State, and we must take a proactive approach to address it,” **said Senator Myrie.** “Violence intervention and interruption programs have a research-based, proven model for breaking the cycle of handgun violence that plagues our streets and takes the life of an estimated one in forty Black boys in America.”

“We cannot depend on one-time grants and unpredictable funding streams to solve a generational threat to public health. This crisis demands a consistent investment in solutions that work. I’m proud that with this budget, New York will become a national leader in holistically addressing the gun violence emergency in communities like the ones I represent,” **added Senator Myrie.**

This year’s budget commits \$10 million to hospital-based violence intervention programs and community-based violence interruption programs, and dedicates ten percent of New York’s federally-funded Victims of Crime Act funding to these groups in future years. These programs provide a credible, non-police response to gun violence, and have a remarkable track record of success in the communities most vulnerable to gun violence.

“Trying to end this crisis through policing alone has tied one hand behind our backs,” **concluded Senator Myrie.** “We must use every available tool in our toolbox to end the violence from Brooklyn to Buffalo and beyond. Today’s victory is very significant, but make no mistake: more efforts are on the way to curb this violence and stop those who profit from it.”

“Gun violence is a public health crisis in Brooklyn and other communities **across the state,**” **said Assembly Member Diana C. Richardson.** “We’re fortunate to have many violence prevention groups working on the ground, directly with the community, to stop shootings

before they occur. I am proud to have led the fight in the Assembly to ensure these groups get the resources they need to have the most impact, and am pleased the Enacted State Budget makes that commitment."

"What an investment in our community!" **said Jacquell Clemmons, Chief Operating Officer of Kings Against Violence Initiative (KAVI).** "Thank you, Senator Myrie and Assembly Member Richardson for your brave leadership! This type of investment allows violence interventions like KAVI to deepen their mission and commitment to community safety, health, justice and healing!"

"Elite Learners, Inc. and the communities that we serve are in desperate need of steady funding sources," **said Camara Jackson, Founder and Executive Director of Elite Learners, Inc.** "Securing these funds will allow us to provide critical services in a critical and unprecedented time. The fact that the funding will be allocated in this year's fiscal budget is a blessing for groups that provide vital on the ground services to communities that experience senseless loss of life due to gun violence. On behalf of the community groups that provide these services, we thank Senator Myrie and his colleagues for giving this issue your time, steadfast attention, and the persistence required to pass the bill."

"One of the best ways to deal with the gun violence epidemic is to provide resources to those closest to it," **said Pastor Gil Monroe, President, 67th Precinct Clergy Council, Inc.** "With the Community Violence Intervention Act, local anti-gun violence groups will be empowered with the requisite financial support to successfully provide effective and sustainable solutions to this epidemic. Public safety is a shared responsibility and as the clergy members of the GodSquad, we take this responsibility very seriously."

"Guns Down Life Up works out of Lincoln Hospital, the busiest single-site emergency department in New York and third busiest in the nation, to provide social empowerment,

intervention, and alternatives to help reduce violence and improve the lives of teens and young adults in the Bronx and throughout New York,” **said James Dobbins, III, Assistant Director of Guns Down, Life Up Initiatives at NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln.** “A more predictable funding stream will help us serve the community better to break the cycle of gun violence. We are grateful to Senator Myrie, Assembly Member Richardson and the entire Legislature for supporting this critical work.”

“Young people in crisis need more support, especially due to Covid-19, and they trust those who understand the trauma and violence they've experienced their entire lives. To prevent shootings in our neighborhoods, we can intervene before violence occurs and empower youth to make our communities safer and more just,” **said Shaina Harrison, Education Director for New Yorkers Against Gun Violence.** “New York took a huge step forward today by ensuring that effective prevention and intervention programs receive more funding. We applaud New York's lawmakers for their commitment to preventing gun violence and saving lives.”

“As young people continue to face ballooning rates of gun violence across the state of New York, we are grateful that New York has moved to invest in violence prevention and reduction strategies,” **said Luis Hernandez, Co-Founder & Executive Director of Youth Over Guns.** “The evidence based, community-led efforts to curb gun violence are what keep us safe. And we must continue to find opportunities to meaningfully expand that work. Particularly in this moment, as our lives depend on it.”

“CAMBA has always worked to meet the emerging needs of Brooklyn communities and launched a violence prevention program in 2015,” **said Joanne Oplustil, President and CEO of CAMBA, Inc.** “Congratulations and thank you Senator Myrie— this will be a game-changer on our streets, for our youth, and for the communities we all serve.”

“The creation of Community Violence Intervention funding is an important step forward for New York in addressing the ongoing epidemic of daily violence that disproportionately impacts Black and Brown communities,” **said Paul Carrillo, Community Violence Initiative Director at Giffords.** “We applaud the New York Legislature for directing resources to effective, community-based solutions focused on healing and addressing the trauma that is at the root of violence. We thank Senator Myrie and Assembly Member Richardson for championing this investment and for their strong commitment to equitable public safety.”

“Local gun violence intervention programs work, period,” **said Diane Rinaldo, a volunteer with the New York chapter of Moms Demand Action.** “By ensuring funding for these community-based programs, our state lawmakers have made a life-saving difference in the communities hit hardest by gun violence. We applaud our lawmakers for allowing us to continue this fight to end daily gun violence in New York.”

“We need common-sense and evidence-based solutions to address gun violence,” **said Kris Brown, president of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.** “The community and hospital based violence intervention programs that this funding will support are just that, addressing gun violence as a public health issue and helping to break cycles of violence and stop conflict. It is impossible to overstate the importance of these programs or to underscore the return on investment from these funds. Brady thanks Senator Myrie for his leadership in securing this funding and the legislature for partnering in such an effort.”

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Senate Floor Calendar

Do you support this bill?