



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Senator Hoylman Introduces Crime Reduction Bill to Allow Federal Aid For Violence Prevention Programs

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL August 30, 2022

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NEW YORK — State Senator Brad Hoylman (Manhattan) introduced a **new bill**, S.9539, to allow Medicaid reimbursement for violence prevention programs. Hospital and community-based violence prevention are proven tools to end retaliatory cycles of community violence, keep communities safe, and heal from an era wracked by gun violence. Any Medicaid beneficiary who has been involved in or injured by community violence and has been referred by a healthcare provider would be eligible.

Violence prevention programs, such as Health Alliance for Violence Intervention members found **across 19 states**, connect qualified professionals with people hospitalized for injuries caused by community violence that are at high risk of retaliation or another violent injury. The Biden administration **informed states** that public insurance programs like Medicaid can and should provide for violence prevention programs, an offer California, Illinois, and Connecticut have already taken up.

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: “Violence is a public health issue that New York State must help address. With our bill, hospitals in partnership with community violence prevention programs will receive federal support to not only treat their patients’ immediate injuries, but also help prevent their future physical and mental harm. Just like other forms of healthcare,

victims of violence deserve follow up care and intervention.”

Those with a history of violent injury are 45% more likely to be readmitted with another such injury within five years, a study at the University of Maryland Medical Center found. With the addition of hospital-based violence intervention programs, the reinjury rate was reduced to 5%. An independent evaluation of New York City’s Cure Violence community-based violence prevention program found that it led to a 50% reduction in homicides and 63% reduction in shootings.

The bill will also have long-term financial incentives: **gunshot injuries cost** the healthcare system \$1 to 2.8 billion a year, which the public largely covers because most individuals treated for gun wounds are covered by public insurance, if at all.

Paul Carrillo, Community Violence Initiative Director, Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, said: "Community violence is a pressing public health emergency. We commend Senator Hoylman for recognizing the importance of tapping into federal Medicaid dollars to support the lifesaving services of frontline violence intervention and prevention professionals. With this legislation, New York joins a growing number of states that are leveraging Medicaid to disrupt cycles of violence in our most impacted communities."

Kyle Fischer, Policy Director, The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, said: “For far too long, HVIPs and other community-based programs that comprise the CVI ecosystem have been forced to operate on shoestring budgets funded by short-term grants and private donors. Medicaid is an important piece of the funding puzzle for cities across the country that are working to build comprehensive, evidence-based CVI ecosystems that address violence at its roots.”

Greg Jackson, Executive Director, Community Justice, said: “When I was shot in 2013, after 21 days in the hospital, six surgeries and six months in physical therapy learning how to walk, I

spent over \$20,000 in initial medical costs during my first few months of recovery. As the gun violence epidemic plagues Black and brown communities, we cannot ignore the devastating mental, physical, and financial impact these tragedies have on survivors and their families. Senator Hoylman's transformative Medicaid reimbursement legislation will lessen the overwhelming financial burden of gun violence for thousands, ensuring survivors have the support needed to focus on their physical and emotional recovery without weighing their needs against the cost of care."

Mary Amsterdam, a volunteer with the New York chapter of Moms Demand Action, said:

"Medicaid reimbursement will bring funding to critical violence intervention programs. Implementing this sustainable funding stream makes New York a step closer to breaking the cycles of violence."

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