

April 2, 2025

Dear House Leaders:

Gun homicides have plummeted 38% in the last two years across Pennsylvania. York had the lowest levels of gun homicides since 2015, Philadelphia since 2014, and Allentown since 1989. Pittsburgh saw a 41% decrease.

This significant reduction in shootings was driven by the more than \$200 million invested by the General Assembly over four years in the Violence Intervention Program (VIP) under the PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency (PCCD). In the most recent year, they received over \$120 million in funding requests. They were able to fund a portion of these data-driven, community-centered programs that provide resources to local governments and nonprofits for law enforcement and community group violence intervention programs, hospital-based and street outreach efforts, and other programs that work with those most at risk for being involved in violence. These programs prevent shootings before they occur. Research shows that each dollar invested returns at least 5 times the value to the state in health care, criminal justice, community safety, and economic value.

To continue this significant progress in reducing violence, we must increase state investment in proven trauma-informed, data-driven community violence intervention and prevention programs. We ask that the General Assembly include \$80 million for FY 2025-26 for the Violence Intervention Program. We also urge the General Assembly to separately fund Governor Shapiro's request for \$21.5 million for the Building Opportunity through Out of School Time (BOOST) program, for a total of \$101.5 million in violence intervention and prevention resources.

Now is the time to double down on a proven strategy that has already saved hundreds of lives and enhanced community safety.

Sincerely,

Rep. Anthony Bellmon

Rep. Morgan Cephas

Rep. Dan Frankel

Rep. Manny Guzman

Rep. Napoleon Nelson

Rep. Jen O'Mara