



Gun Violence Prevention

Increasing funding for grassroots gun violence prevention programs

[Budget Request to Fund Cal-VIP Program](#)

and [AB 1603 The Break the Cycle of Violence Act](#)

Background

The California Violence Intervention and Prevention (Cal-VIP) Program provides competitive grants to cities and nonprofit organizations that implement evidence-based violence reduction initiatives in impacted communities focused on intervention and prevention. Initial funding for Cal-VIP in 2017 and 2018 was just over \$9 million, and the goal is to increase funding to \$39 million. Grant money from Cal-VIP is awarded on a competitive basis to local, grassroots programs that address gun violence, as well as direct grants to California cities to build strategies to address gun violence and to build partnerships with these organizations. Funding programs like Cal-VIP have already seen great success in New York and Massachusetts, with estimated 40% and 25% reductions in gun violence, respectively. Increasing funding will allow more cities and programs to benefit, and those programs will be able to see even more success. This year, a broad coalition of advocacy organizations, community and faith leaders, and public officials is calling on state lawmakers to make California the nation's leader in investing in effective violence intervention initiatives.¹

Budget Request Summary

We are urging Governor Newsom to include in his May revised budget at least \$39 million per year for at least three years for the CalVIP competitive grant program, including \$2 million annually for rigorous and independent evaluations of CalVIP-funded programs. We are urging the California legislature to include the same funding in the budget they will pass in mid-June. A \$39 million appropriation for CalVIP would allow California to help meaningfully expand and replicate effective violence reduction strategies in more communities across the state, while also funding rigorous evaluations of CalVIPfunded programs to

¹ Giffords Fact Sheet "INVESTING IN EFFECTIVE VIOLENCE INTERVENTION INITIATIVES IN CALIFORNIA"

establish best practices. This funding is critical for California to achieve the sort of transformative progress other states have made against gun violence within the last decade—progress that has kept thousands of families and communities safe.

AB 1603 (Wicks) Break the Cycle of Violence Act Summary

This bill would establish the CalVIP grant program in statute to provide clearer and more stable requirements about how to focus CalVIP resources on the most effective programs in communities that are most heavily impacted by violence. This bill would ensure that CalVIP funding goes to communities that have the highest numbers and rates of homicides and to programs that demonstrate the strongest likelihood of reducing violence. It would prevent CalVIP funding to be used for initiatives that contribute to mass incarceration.

Jewish Values

Jewish tradition emphasizes the sanctity and value of human life. The Mishnah teaches us that “one who takes a single life, it is as though this one has destroyed the entire universe. And one who saves a single life, it is as though this one has saved the entire universe” (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5). Dehumanizing human beings and the carelessness with which human life is taken by guns directly violate our tradition. Our scripture also encourages peaceful pursuit of our mutual welfare. Isaiah exhorts the people of the earth to “beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.” (Isaiah 2:4) We are commanded to turn weapons of destruction into tools for the greater good of society. Leviticus 19:16 instructs us, “Do not stand idly by while your neighbor’s blood is shed.” We believe in the power of prayer, but prayer is a call to action, not a substitute for it.