



**To:** Minnesota Senate Members of the Judiciary, Public Safety, and Corrections Conference Committee

**From:** The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention

**Date:** May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Subject:** Protect Community Violence Prevention Funds in the Final Budget

The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) is writing to urge you to protect the Community Violence Prevention funds in the Public Safety budget. The HAVI represents 64 hospital-based and hospital-linked member programs and over 38 emerging violence intervention programs across the United States and is a leading organization with expertise in community violence intervention (CVI). We are a proud partner of the Minnesota Hospital-based Violence Intervention Program at Hennepin Healthcare-Next Step.

At the HAVI, we believe that gun violence is a public health issue that requires communities and the public sectors – healthcare, law enforcement - working together to find solutions. The most effective way to prevent community violence is to coordinate a comprehensive, community-based strategy that links healthcare, law enforcement, and community members together to develop a public health-centered response to address and reduce gun violence.

CVI programs work in partnership with law enforcement to provide comprehensive care to victims of gun violence and ensure they have the support needed to recover and move forward, decreasing the chances of repeat offenses. These programs provide essential services to survivors of violence and are a critical component of a comprehensive community safety ecosystem to break the cycle of violence. Without this funding, the progress made in reducing violence and supporting communities in Minnesota would be at serious risk. Funding for this work is more crucial now than ever.

In late April, the Department of Justice terminated grant awards for dozens of victim services and community violence prevention programs, disrupting essential, life-saving services in the communities most impacted by violence. Many organizations now face significant uncertainty about how to sustain programming. The abrupt cancellation of funding jeopardizes the effectiveness and continuity of violence prevention efforts. Now, state funding is the only remaining support for many of these organizations that provide services to communities that suffer from unacceptably high levels of gun violence in both urban and rural communities across the state.

Additionally, CVI presents an opportunity to invest in community-led initiatives that promote peace and address trauma, while also supporting the work of police in areas that experience the highest rates of interactions with the criminal justice system. Recognizing that firearm homicides and shootings significantly contribute to the high costs associated with violent crime in the United States, CVI programs offer a promising approach to reduce expenses in both the criminal justice and healthcare systems. Ongoing investment in CVI programs is vital for public safety in Minnesota. These programs enhance neighborhood safety, support job creation, aid law enforcement, and revitalize communities.

We ask that you support the House's position and ensure these funds stay where they're needed most.



Sincerely,

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