

# FAITH IN TEXAS



## LIVEFREE DFW Plan

RETRAIN. REFORM. RESTORE.

"Dallas has got to be ground zero for change in the country."

Senator Royce West

For many in our city, Dallas Strong became the rallying cry after the July 7<sup>th</sup> shooting. While our entire city mourned the loss of our officers there were many whose grief for unnecessary loss of life did not begin on that day. We sadly watched citizens chose sides “Backing the Blue” and ignoring the pain of those who lost their lives to the over policing of black, brown and low income communities. Or lifting up the plight of black and brown people at the expense of our civil servants who were tragically taken from us by hate and anger. Yet there were, and are, many of us who believe that any unnecessary loss of life is an affront to our humanity.

Senator Royce West declared in the aftermath of July 7<sup>th</sup>, “*Dallas has got to be ground zero for change in this country.*” Faith in Texas, an affiliate of PICO National Network, took inspiration from this bold claim and created our “Ground Zero Plan”. We agree and we want Dallas to prioritize criminal justice reform in three areas.

**RETRAIN: Expand Police Training.** We want officers to receive new tools that empower them to act safely and equitably.

**REFORM: Adopt Best Policing Practices.** We want protection, accountability, integrity and transparency as the basis of our justice system.

**RESTORE: Build Systems that Promote Trust.** We want restorative justice programs and community based safety strategies implemented to remove barriers limiting formerly incarcerated citizens from achieving an equitable quality of life. We also want to restore safety and quality of life for citizens and officers through officer support programs and group violence intervention (GVI) strategies.

This policy platform was developed in consultation with professionals at the highest levels in their fields but the project has been driven locally by mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, the formerly incarcerated, those who have never seen the inside of a prison cell, clergy members and businesspeople. It was a collaborative effort between citizens of many races and socio-economic classes who after asking the question “*Who is my neighbor?*” were moved to truly stand in solidarity with one another and act to end the inequity that divides us. Some of us were people of good will who daily walked by our sisters and brothers in pain before coming to our senses. Others of us grew up living on the margins of our Dallas county communities. What holds us together is a belief that human dignity should be the guiding principle of our communities.

This is our collective contribution to creating policies that will serve as ground zero for the change we expect to see in our country. We understand policy reform is not a cure all for our community’s problems. We accept our inability to legislate change in people’s hearts. However, we know policy restrains systemic evils. More than that, we believe policy helps to create the community where our citizens can operate as their best selves.

Over the next several months, we must discover together what it means to be Dallas Strong. Our prayer is Dallas Strong represents something beyond what any of us can accomplish alone.

May God grant us the grace required to look with clear eyes at injustices in our community, to hear the pain of those caught in systems of mass incarceration and mass criminalization, to recognize our neighbors who are hurting and do our part to bring an end to the mass incarceration and mass criminalization that has plagued our communities and threatens our very humanity. It has been too late, for too many, for too long. It’s time for that to change.

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# RETRAIN. REFORM. RESTORE

## Why Do We Need Policy Reform?

### Behavior Can Be Regulated:

A Lesson from History

*Certainly, if the problem is to be solved then in the final sense hearts must be changed. Religion and education must play a great role in changing the heart. But we must go on to say that while it may be true that morality cannot be legislated, behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me but it can keep him from lynching me and I think that is pretty important, also. So there is a need for executive orders. There is a need for judicial decrees. There is a need for civil rights.”*

~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.<sup>1</sup>

### Injustices Can Be Acknowledged:

Changing the Narrative

**What we hear: “Everyone has been given the same things to be successful.”**

We believe government systems on the national, state and local level must be administered in just ways. This includes an acknowledgment by all citizens of past injustices that have targeted Black, Brown, and low-income communities.

**What we hear: There are “good” officers and “bad” officers and we just need to weed out the bad ones.**

We believe by enacting equitable policies and community based justice programs we can create an environment where our officers and our communities work together for the common good. We believe the potential for a healthy overall justice system grows exponentially when educators and faith communities are enlisted as partners.

**What we hear: To be pro systemic reform is to be anti police and vice versa.**

We believe despite historic steps forward, the current system continues to create animosity between the police force and members of the communities they are sworn to serve. Our current system allows no one to operate at their best; systemic change benefits us all, civilians and officers alike.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://news.cornellcollege.edu/dr-martin-luther-kings-visit-to-cornell-college/>

**What we hear: “Once a felon always a felon.”**

We believe the current justice system hinders those who have served their time from successfully reentering society and claiming a position as a productive citizen. Through the development of a justice system that restores rather than punishes, we can remove barriers to all our citizens living their best lives.

————— **Communities Can Be Healed:** —————

Retrain. Reform. Restore.

**Retrain: Expand Police Training.** We want officers to receive new tools that empower them to act safely and equitably.

**Reform: Adopt Best Policing Practices.** We want protection, accountability, integrity and transparency, as the basis of our justice system.

**Restore: Build Systems that Promote Trust.** We want restorative justice programs and community based safety strategies systems implemented to remove barriers limiting our formerly incarcerated sisters and brothers from achieving an equitable quality of life. We also seek to restore safety and quality of life for both citizens and officers through officer support programs and group violence intervention (GVI) strategies.

————— **Dallas Needs Reform:** —————

Dallas County Executive Summary

Dallas County, like a great deal of United States Counties, puts far too many Black and Latino men and women in jail unnecessarily. Our county fails to implement best practices for reducing incarceration, holding police accountable and preventing gun violence.

- Between 1985 and 2014 the per capita jail population in Dallas County more than doubled.
- Three out of four inmates in Dallas County jails in 2014 had not been convicted of any crime.
- Blacks make up approximately 23% of the population of Dallas County, but more than half of the jail population.
- In 2014, more than 11% of the Texas prison population had been convicted in Dallas County.
- The County’s District Attorney, Sheriff, and Police Chief have made some attempts at stop-gap measures, however, long-term and forward looking policies that will end mass-incarceration and community violence have yet to be pursued by these offices.

Mass incarceration may be a national issue, but solving it requires sustained local action in Dallas

County. The good news is successful models for reform are available. Other counties in Texas and across the nation have adopted tested, research-based policies and have succeeded in reducing the number of Blacks and Latinos in jail and under supervision in the criminal justice system. These policies have also been successful in making communities safer and refocusing public resources on education, de-escalation and implicit bias training, drug treatment and violence prevention.

- Homicide rates in Dallas are rising, but the city has not adopted an evidence-based Ceasefire approach to interrupt gun violence.
- While Dallas County has followed the lead of the City of Austin and more than 100 jurisdictions across the country in “banning the box” that requires formerly incarcerated persons to state that they were charged with a felony on job applications. Promoting fair hiring of formerly incarcerated men and women,. However, the City of Dallas does not have a fair hiring policy in place for private sector employers.
- Dallas Independent School District currently has Restorative Justice programs designed to break the school-to-prison pipeline in only 6 of its 227 schools.
- Dallas County has not implemented policies – including eliminating cash bail – designed to prevent people from spending time in jail simply because they are poor.
- While the county’s Second Chance courts have had a positive impact on justice issues in the area, they are limited in scope, funding, and personnel. There is much more Dallas can do to keep people with mental health and drug problems, as well as first time offenders out of the incarceration system.
- Dallas County continues to collaborate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers rather than leaving immigration enforcement to the federal government, as many cities and counties across the country have done to promote public safety.
- Dallas County District Attorney Susan Hawk has not adopted responsible prosecutor practices, such as reporting on racial disparities in charging or providing pre-trial services within 24 hours to people who’ve been arrested.

This report is a call for leadership. It has become too late for far too many people. Elected law enforcement officials, here in Dallas and across the United States, must choose whether to provide leadership to end mass criminalization and mass incarceration or to postpone action until these issues escalate beyond the point where current leadership will be allowed the opportunity to effect change.

## **Local Data**

- ***Rise of Mass Incarceration in Dallas:*** Between 1985-2014 the per capita jail population in Dallas County *doubled* from 1.25 to 2.52 incarcerated individuals per 1,000 residents.

- **Racial Disparities:** Blacks are consistently over represented in the Dallas County jail population. From 1985 to 2013 black inmate incarceration rates peaked at 60% never dropping below 44%, despite never constituting more than 24% of the county's population. Blacks are 4.3 times more likely to be in jail than Whites in Dallas.<sup>1</sup> From 1985 to 2013 the percentage of White inmates in the county jail system declined from 49% of all inmates in 1985 to just 17% in 2013. While the proportion of White residents in Dallas County declined over time, the proportion of the percent of White inmates to the percent of White residents has fallen much faster, from 0.66:1 in 1985 to 0.52:1 in 2013, indicating that the decline in White inmates cannot be explained by local demographic trends. Over the same period, the percent Latinos in Dallas County jails has grown from 3% in 1985 to almost 33% in 2013 (an increase of more than 1,000%). This is far faster than the rate of growth of the Latino population as a whole, which increased approximately 240% between 1985 and 2013. Latinos are now 1.6 times more likely than Whites to be in jail in Dallas.
- **Women:** Despite a small reduction since the late 1990's overall the number of women in Dallas County jails has increased by a staggering 550%.
- **Unconvicted Inmates:** 74% of inmates in Dallas County jails in 2014 had not been convicted of any crime at the time of the ASJ survey. Over the last 10 years of ASJ data, an average of 62% of all inmates were incarcerated despite being innocent. Dallas County has regularly failed to report the amount of time served by people who were found innocent or who were released after charges had been dismissed. The data the county does provide shows that people who were eventually released without being charged or found guilty spent considerable amounts of time behind bars. In 2011, the only year for which data was provided, 25% of those released without a conviction spent more than one week behind bars, with 17% serving more than thirty days.

## ————— We Believe in this Plan! —————

"Twenty years: Five to be served in prison and 15 on probation. This was my fate at twenty-three years old. I spent five years as a ward of the state in the Alabama Department of Corrections and the most recent two years of my life trying to stay in my Dallas' probation officer's good graces because my very freedom depends on it. Despite no prior interaction with the justice system a trafficking conviction sealed my future and I have been permanently branded a felon. A title that will dictate my future and deny me of some of the most basic rights afforded to a United States citizen. The search for gainful employment has been both brutal and dehumanizing.

My vision for Dallas is a city where all people can live in equity being afforded every opportunity to improve our lives. Dallas is such a diverse city and all people should have an equal chance to thrive. To 'Live Free' is the chance to just "be" without the fear of a single mistake marking you for a lifetime as less than human. The Ground Zero plan will help us achieve that vision together by raising Dallas to the standard for equity in the



country. This plan promotes policy that speaks to the injustices that plague black, brown, and low-income people. It promotes hope in a time where it seems no hope is left.”

**Brittany White**, Live Free Organizer, Faith in Texas

“Since the inception of private prisons, the rate of incarceration in the United States has dramatically increased by criminal laws that impose steep sentences and curtail the opportunity to earn probation and parole. This current incarceration rate deprives record numbers of people, like myself, of our liberty, disproportionately affects people of color, and has at best a minimal effect on public safety. Because these companies only profit from the commission of crimes, it creates an inherent conflict between allocation of financial resources for restoration, education, prevention and treatment versus arrest, conviction, and incarceration. Justice and equity are secondary to profit when private prison operators and private sector contractors spend millions lobbying Federal and State legislators to maintain harsh, criminal laws.

To LIVE FREE is exercising full responsibility for my life, possessions, and path. Being free of fear from those sworn to protect me because of the color of my skin. Knowing that the Bill of Rights, contained in the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, are a reality for all citizens. Having freedom from all legislative oppression resulting from the misuse and abuse of power for personal gain

The Ground Zero plan has the potential to unite our cities around those common issues that are essential to justice, equity, and liberty. Ensuring that people, particularly those who are most vulnerable in society, are able to have their voices heard on issues that are important to them, defend and safeguard their rights, and above all have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives.”

**Rev. Dr. Michael Flemons**, *Assistant Pastor*

“I worked as a Parole Officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Dallas, Texas. During that time I served in the lowest income and highest crime rate communities of Dallas, Texas. I spent thousands of hours working with people of all races, religions and economic statuses. What has become apparent to me is not only are these women and men often returning home to the same environments that pushed them into the criminal justice system but there is also a lack of effective resources available to assist in the transition back into life as a citizen. I also realize that those who work within law enforcement have become desensitized to the reality of those trapped in the justice system because they are not allowed to see these individuals as people but as numbers, case files and police reports.

I have a vision for Dallas where we will not only bring an end to the cycle of recidivism but also the entire system of mass incarceration and mass criminalization that plagues our city. A city where those who have served time in the jails and prisons return home that they will be greeted with opportunities instead of mandatory obligations keeping them further entrapped in the system. A city where young men and women who have mental health and substance abuse issues will receive the care and support they deserve instead of being thrown into an institution that only exacerbates their primary condition.

“LIVE FREE” means being in a space we can all be ourselves free of judgment and free from the fear of persecution for simply trying LIVE. To have systems in place and people working within them who see the individuals on the other side of the aisle or issue as human beings. The Ground Zero plan will change our community by holding city leadership, law enforcement and citizens accountable for our roles in creating a new system that respects the human dignity of all our citizens. This plan will help heal and restore our communities in a way that the Dallas- Fort Worth area has not experienced, setting the table for our shared fight for justice!

# RETRAIN. REFORM. RESTORE.

## Expand Police Training

**What is the problem?** The current training regime for police officers fails to effectively teach them how to interact with our communities in a way that protects and preserves life. For example, police recruits spend 58 hours learning how to shoot firearms and only 8 hours learning how to de-escalate situations. That's a 7:1 problem. For every 7 hours spent training with firearms only 1 hour of training is provided on how to de-escalate situations.

**What is the solution?** An intensive training regime is needed to help police officers learn the behaviors and skills needed to interact appropriately with communities. We recommend police recruits receive at least 40 hours of de-escalation and implicit bias training, included in this would be spending time with citizens from the communities they will be policing. Furthermore, we recommend a 3:1 solution for officer training. For every 3 hours of continuing education in firearms and tactical training, officers should receive 1 hour of training in the areas outlined below.

### Local

- Address “unconscious” or “implicit” racial bias
  - Require current and prospective police officers to undergo mandatory implicit racial bias testing, *including testing for bias in shoot/don't shoot decision-making*, and develop a clear policy for considering an officer's level of racial bias in law enforcement certification, the hiring process, performance evaluations, decisions about whether an officer should be deployed to communities of color, promotion reviews
- Require officers to undergo training - including reality/scenario-based training - on the following topics on at least a quarterly basis and involve the community - including youth of color from the community- in their design and implementation:
  - Implicit bias
  - Procedural justice
  - Relationship-based policing
  - Community interaction
  - Crisis intervention, mediation, conflict resolution, and rumor control

- Appropriate engagement with youth
- Appropriate engagement with LGBTQ, transgender and gender nonconforming individuals
- Appropriate engagement with individuals who are English language learners
- Appropriate engagement with individuals from different religious affiliations
- Appropriate engagement with individuals who are differently abled
- De-escalation and minimizing the use of force

# RETRAIN. REFORM. RESTORE.

## Adopt Best Policing Practices

### **USE OF FORCE POLICIES:** *Elevated Protection of Human Life*

**What is the problem?** Police should have the skills and cultural competence to protect and serve our communities without killing people - just as police do in England, Germany, Japan and other developed countries. In 2014, police killed at least 253 unarmed people and 91 people who were stopped for mere traffic violations. The following policy solutions can restrict the police from using excessive force in everyday interactions with civilians

**What is the solution?** We propose the development and implementation of standard procedures for all police departments for all instances when deadly force is used. With the revision and strengthening of local use of force policies a new level of protection for human life can be established. Policies should include guidance on reporting, investigation, discipline, and accountability and increase transparency by making the policies available online. Monitor and proactively address instances of excessive force used by law enforcement officials. Maintain a publically accessible database of incidents of misconduct, resignation while under investigation and violations of department policy.

#### **State**

- Amend Texas Penal Code chapter 9.51 subsection (c) and (d) to change the terminology from immediate threat to imminent threat.

#### **Local**

- For the Dallas Police Department to adopt a policy approved by a board of law enforcement and civilian oversight representatives on the use of lethal force.

### **ISSUE BODY CAMERAS:** *Elevated Accountability for Officers*

**What is the problem?** While they are not a cure-all, body cameras and cell phone video have illuminated cases of police violence and have shown to be important tools for holding officers accountable. Nearly every case where a police officer in the United States has been charged with a crime for killing a civilian this year has relied on video evidence showing the officer's actions.

**What is the solution?** We propose that all police departments be equipped with body cameras

through federal funding. We also request that extensive time and training be put into the development of a fair and equal body camera policy for both officers and civilians. The policy created by the Dallas Police Department should be one that sets the standard on how to effectively use body cameras in law enforcement.

### **State**

- Allow civilians to review footage of themselves or their relatives before making “on the record” statements to officers and request this be released to the public and stored for at least two years (This relies upon the Texas Public Records law currently for releasing video footage.)
- Prohibit footage from being used in tandem with facial recognition software, as fillers in photo arrays, or to create a database or pool of mugshots.<sup>2</sup>

### **Local**

- That the policy for the use of body cameras by the Dallas Police Department be made public by September 1, 2016 as required by Senate Bill 158 Sec 411.448 (b)<sup>3</sup>
- Require body and dash camera footage to be stored externally and ensure district attorneys and civilian oversight structures have access to the footage. There is currently a policy in place to prevent tampering with video but none for how the footage will be logged or audited.
- Include a disciplinary matrix clearly defining consequences for officers who fail to adhere to the agency's body camera policy.
- Allow subjects the opportunity to request being anonymous. Currently, the DPD policy allows for the recording of “all contacts that are conducted within the scope of an official law enforcement capacity.”<sup>4</sup>
- Notify subjects that they have the option to remain anonymous and stop recording/storing footage, if they choose this option.

## **END FOR PROFIT POLICING: *Elevated Integrity for Financial Systems***

**What is the problem?** The people being policed should not be funding the policing. Profits and quotas should not drive policing.

**What is the solution?** Police should be working to keep people safe, not contributing to a system that profits from stopping, searching, ticketing, arresting and incarcerating people.

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<sup>2</sup> Baltimore Body Cam Policy.Pdf,” accessed August 29, 2016, [https://www.dropbox.com/s/52o4dvue8ullsid/Baltimorebodycam policy.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/52o4dvue8ullsid/Baltimorebodycam%20policy.pdf?dl=0).

<sup>3</sup> 84(R) SB 158 - Introduced Version - Bill Text,” accessed August 29, 2016, <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/84R/billtext/html/SB00158I.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> accessed August 29, 2016, <http://bwcscorecard.org>.

## State

- Prohibit courts from ordering individuals on parole or probation to pay supervision fees and other correctional fees.
- Prohibit police from seizing property of civilians (i.e. civil forfeiture) unless they are convicted of a crime and the state establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the property is subject to forfeiture. Police should also be prohibited from keeping any property that has been legally forfeited.

## Local

- Allow judges the discretion to waive fines and fees for low-income people or initiate payment plans.
- Ban police departments from using ticket or arrest quotas to evaluate the performance of police officers.
- Ban issuing fines or arrest warrants for civilians who fail to appear in court for a traffic citation.
- Ban generating more than 10% of total municipal revenue from fines and fees.

## **APPOINT INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATORS: *Elevated Transparency Between Civil Servants and Civilians***

**What is the problem?** Local prosecutors rely on local police departments to gather the evidence and testimony needed to successfully prosecute criminals. This makes it hard for them to investigate and prosecute the same police officers in cases of police violence. These cases should not rely on the police to investigate themselves and should not be prosecuted by someone who has an incentive to protect the police officers involved.

**What is the solution?** By appointing a special prosecutor at the state level a police department's ability to tamper with the investigation is removed. Asking an officer to investigate a fellow officer crosses an ethical boundary and opens the door for bias and intimidation. A state-level special prosecutor is an uninvolved third party whose responsibility is solely to investigate incidents of police violence. In addition, an independent investigation must take place any time police kill or seriously injure civilians.

## Federal

- Pass legislation such as the Police Training and Independent Review Act of 2015.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Text - H.R.2302 - 114th Congress (2015-2016): Police Training and Independent Review Act of 2015," January 6, 2015, accessed August 29, 2016, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2302/text>.

## **State**

- Create a special prosecutors department tasked to investigate incidents of police violence and excessive force that will be:
  - Authorized and required to prosecute all cases where police kill or seriously injure a civilian, as well as deaths in custody and cases where a civilian alleges criminal misconduct against a police officer.
  - Equipped with an office and resources to conduct thorough investigations.
  - Required to have its Chief Prosecutor chosen from a list of candidates offered by vetted community organizations and experts that represent a true cross-section of the community.

## **Local**

- Require independent investigations of all cases where police kill or seriously injure civilians. The independent investigators should be:
  - Authorized and required to investigate and prosecute all cases where police kill or seriously injure a civilian, in-custody deaths and cases where a civilian alleges criminal misconduct against a police officer.
  - Authorized and required to investigate all cases where police kill.
  - Authorized and required to be chosen at random from a list of the largest ten agencies in the state.
  - Authorized and required to report their findings to the public.

# RETRAIN. REFORM. RESTORE.

## Build Systems that Promote Trust

### **Restorative Justice Programs: *Focus on Rehabilitation, Intervention and Reintegration***

**What is the problem?** Mass incarceration is fueled by laws that not only allow for the constant criminalization of Black, Brown, and low-income people, but also, creates unfair obstacles in the paths of those who have “paid their debt to society.” It consistently denies formerly incarcerated persons the ability to secure gainful employment at a livable wage. Instead of safe housing options we promote a revolving door in, out, and back into the criminal Justice system.

**What is the solution?** We want to limit policing and sentencing that targets black, brown, and low-income communities, while creating a justice system that focuses on Restorative Justice practices that focus on rehabilitation, intervention, and reintegration verses punishment and separation.

#### **Local**

- **Institute a Ban the Box policy by enacting fair-hiring and housing city ordinance for both the Private and Public sector (Ban the Box).** Fair-Hiring ordinances for our cities should mirror strong ordinances like the city of Philadelphia. *The following should be similarly applied to the private and public housing application process where applicable:*
  - Employers *cannot* ask about your criminal background on job applications or during any job interview.
  - Employers can run your criminal background check ONLY AFTER a conditional offer of employment is made.
  - Criminal convictions can be considered ONLY if they occurred less than 7 years from the application date.
  - Arrests that did not lead to conviction cannot be used in any employment decisions.
  - If the background check reveals a conviction, the employer must consider:
    - The type of offense and the time that has passed since it occurred.
    - Its connection to the being applied for; and
    - The applicants job history, character references, and any evidence of rehabilitation.



- Employers can reject an applicant based on criminal record ONLY if the applicant poses an unacceptable risk to the business or to other people.
- If the applicant is rejected, the employer must send the decision in writing with a copy of the background report used to make the decision.
- The applicant will have 10 days to give an explanation of their record, proof that it is wrong, or proof of rehabilitation.

- **End Broken Windows Policing**

- Broken windows policing is the strategy of cracking down with full force on minor infractions. It is not whether these things are legal or not, or enforced or not, but the idea of responding disproportionately to minor infractions on the theory that they escalate into bigger crimes.
- Broken windows policing includes the following activities that do not threaten public safety and are often used to police black, brown and low-income people.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consumption of Alcohol on Streets</li> <li>▪ Marijuana Possession</li> <li>▪ Disorderly Conduct</li> <li>▪ Trespassing</li> <li>▪ Loitering</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disturbing the Peace (including Loud Music)</li> <li>▪ Spitting</li> <li>▪ Jaywalking</li> <li>▪ Bicycling on the Sidewalk</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

- Benefits would include savings to taxpayers through shortened arrest to arraignment time, and reduced use of jail space. For example, in 2012 (the last year for which Dallas County reported this information), 991 inmates were released without having been convicted of a crime. This number does not include the individuals who would have been found not guilty at trial but were forced to take plea deals because they could not afford bail or to be away from work or family for an unknown length of time.

Time Served in Dallas County jail (2012)		# of Individuals
More than 180 days		5
Between 31-180 days		163
Between 8-30 days		113
Between 3-7 days		241
Between 1-2 days		469
Less than 1 day		0

- It costs Dallas approximately \$47.50 per day per person to incarcerate.

- **Expand and fully adopt second-chance community courts as standard operating procedure.**

- We want community courts to address all non-violent crimes, all first-time offenders who are minors, and an end to "Broken Windows" or "Zero Tolerance" policing.

- Adoption of the second chance community court model throughout the City of Dallas could significantly impact the amount of money the city spends on addressing community code violations such as cleaning up graffiti, mowing over-grown lawns and cleaning up code violations. You can view an impact report here.
- Currently the court's expansion is being supported by a \$200,000 grant from the Department of Justice. Full adoption of the court would include making it a line item on the city's annual budget.
- Benefits would include improvement of quality of life for the courts participants through the reduction of substance abuse convictions and the procurement of employment

## **Community-Based Safety Strategies: *Fund Long-Term Social Programming that Make Communities Safer***

**What is the problem?** In the last few decades, the federal government has thrown billions of dollars at state and local governments to fund quickly expanding police forces and jails.<sup>6</sup> Since Sept. 11, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) alone has given between \$30 billion and \$40 billion in direct grants to state and local law enforcement, as well as other first responders. The federal government doled out an additional \$376 million to state and local law enforcement in 2013 through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Grant program.<sup>7</sup> That was down from more than \$1 billion in 1998. In addition, an estimated \$5 billion worth of surplus military equipment has gone to local law enforcement, including more than 40 departments on college campuses and school districts, through the Department of Defense's (DOD)1033 P. These funds are given with little or no oversight and there is no accountability mechanism.

There is no evidence that this massive overspending on incarceration reduces crime rates or keeps communities safer. The evidence shows that communities become stronger and safer through jobs, education and investment. Investments in community-based drug and mental health treatment, education, universal pre-K, and other social programs can make communities safer and improve life outcomes for all. As an example of the power programs like this can have, studies show that children who do not participate in preschool programs are 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18. By contrast, summer job programs for young people in Chicago have brought about a 43 percent decrease in arrests over a 16-month period. The evidence is clear: jobs, and education make communities wealthier, stronger and safer..

**What is the solution?** The state and local government should reallocate funding from federal grants currently dedicated to policing and incarceration, which evidence indicates have consistently worsened rather than improved community issues, and instead invest those funds in long-term safety strategies such as education, community restorative justice and employment programs that have been shown to improve community safety.

<sup>6</sup> "The Flow of Money and Equipment to Local Police," *U.S.*, December 1, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/23/us/flow-of-money-and-equipment-to-local-police.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/23/us/flow-of-money-and-equipment-to-local-police.html?_r=2)

<sup>7</sup> accessed August 29, 2016, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS22416.pdf>.

## **Federal:**

- **Legislative:** Congress would have to amend the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005, change the formula-based awards to end the mandated support of police departments, and make explicit that community based crime prevention (restorative justice) and long-term safety strategies (youth employment and educational programs) are permissible grantees for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program.
- **Department of Justice (DOJ):** While a sizable portion of JAG grants are formula-based (meaning that departments automatically receive funds based on congressional formulas), the DOJ has some discretion in how much funding it awards to police departments. Additionally, the DOJ has full discretion in the granting of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and other grant funds. In 2015, the COPS office gave \$163 million to police departments across the country. The DOJ should prioritize grants to community based organizations focusing on restorative justice, employment and education.

## **State:**

- Stipulate that all federal grant dollars must be allocated to community based programs/concepts that have a proven track record in lowering incarcerations rates in black, brown, and low-income communities. The state of Texas has been allocated \$13,376,852 from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice program.

## **Local:**

- Stipulate that all federal re-grant dollars must be allocated to community-based programs/concepts that have a proven track record in lowering incarcerations rates in black, brown, and low-income communities.
- Stipulate that all federal re-grant dollars must be allocated to community based programs/concepts that have a proven track record in lowering incarcerations rates in black, brown, and low-income communities

## ***Authors & Contributors of this specific Policy Overview***

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## ***Officer Support Programs: Raise the Wage Floor and Incentivize Live-Work Programs for Officers, Ban Open Carry in City Limits***

**What is the problem?** Currently patrol officers, those who are most likely to come in direct contact with the community on a daily basis, are not receiving a fair wage. Police work is difficult and demanding, and the low wage floor for patrol officers places greater stress on these vital members of our community and unconscionably undervalues the work they do. Low wages also

force officers to work increased overtime to maintain a fair standard of living, imposing further stress and impacting their overall wellbeing. A recent NBC report speaks to the effects of low wages against the benefits of paying officers a fair middle class wage.<sup>8</sup>

Our community must also address the relationship between our Second Amendment right to bear arms and officer and civilian safety. The recent sniper attack in Dallas is a clear representation of how more guns, even legally owned and carried, can and do create confusion and danger for both officers and citizens who are attempting to protect their communities.

**What is the solution?** We want to raise the wage floor for patrol officers and introduce financial incentives for officers to reside in the neighborhoods where they serve. We also want to place a municipal ban on the “open carry” of licensed firearms in the City of Dallas.

### **State**

- In order to have a municipal ban of House Bill 910 (Open Carry of licensed firearms), Senate Bill 273 (civil penalties against government agencies that restrict open carry on property they own or lease) would need to be amended.

### **Local**

- Increase wages for officers. We suggest that police departments of the metroplex raise the median patrol officer salary to \$60,000 with a wage floor of \$48,000. This ensures that salary increases affect the entry level officers and the greatest number of patrol officers.
  - Dallas, Irving, Garland, and McKinney have a median salary for patrol officers of \$52,991 with a low of \$44,136.
  - The living wage for a family with 2 adults 1 child with only 1 working adult is \$48,464.
  - The last wage increase the Dallas Police Department received was a three percent increase across the board in 2013.
- Develop a monetary incentive-based plan to encourage officers to move into the city limits of those cities they work.
- Use of Patrol cars as personal cars with fuel allowances. This policy is already in place in Cedar Park, Round Rock and Georgetown.
  - Loans given to all employees who move to the city that is forgiven after a given number of years of employment. This policy is already in use in San Marcos.
  - Possible property tax rebates for officers who live in the city limits. This policy is being considered in Baltimore, MD.
  - Municipal ban on the open carry of firearms within city limits.

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<sup>8</sup> Seth Freed Wessler, *Police Pay Gap: Many of America's Finest Struggle on Poverty Wages*, (NBC News), October 26, 2014, <http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/in-plain-sight/police-pay-gap-many-americas-finest-struggle-poverty-wages-n232701>.

- According to a Reuters review of state statutes, 15 of the 45 states with laws allowing the open carry of handguns give cities power to restrict those laws, and law enforcement leaders in several major cities say municipalities should have the power to suspend open carry laws when needed to protect public safety. The open carrying of firearms is already subject to 54 legal location restrictions, including a prohibition against open carrying in specific densely populated cities in Pennsylvania and Virginia. For instance, open carry is legal throughout Pennsylvania, but not within the City of Philadelphia per 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 6108.

## **Solution Based (GVI) Strategies: *Consult with National Network for Safe Communities***

**What is the problem?** Gun homicides in America are disproportionately concentrated in urban areas, particularly in impoverished and underserved minority communities. Underserved communities in the United States have homicide rates well beyond those of comparable communities in other industrialized countries. The absence of constructive resources, combined with targeted police strategies that favor arrest and incarceration over crisis management and rehabilitation, translate into a massive overrepresentation of marginalized people in United States prisons and cemeteries.

**What is the solution?** A number of promising intervention strategies specifically designed to reduce urban gun violence have emerged in recent years. A growing body of evidence shows that these programs, when implemented correctly and properly funded, produce lifesaving results in a short time. We believe by implementing these strategies and expanding their focus to include minor offenses like, loitering, public intoxication, petty vandalism, loud music, and other similar incidents we can safely meet the needs of our communities while both saving life and severely decreasing arrests.

### **State**

- Reallocate state funding or give incentives to aid the creation of these programs, and establish sustainable funding strategies to support them over time.

### **Local**

- Convene a local, interagency Working Group consisting of leaders from community organizations, social service agencies, and law enforcement. This Working Group will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the GVI strategy defined in Appendix A.
- Gather the Data. Identify the individuals and groups most at risk for either committing or becoming victims of gun violence and petty crime.
- Communicate the Message. Invite the identified individuals to a “call-in” where local community

members, law enforcement officials, and social service providers come together to present a powerful message that shootings and other crimes must stop.

- Simultaneously, a message must reach the community that, when they see criminal behavior, to contact members of this coalition instead of their local police.
- Follow Through and Repeat. The next time a homicide is committed, law enforcement must follow through with its promise to take all available legal enforcement action against the responsible group. If petty crime cannot be de-escalated by the GVI team, again, the GVI team will contact law enforcement.

# Appendix A

## Community and Law Enforcement Partnership Model to End Gun Violence, Homicides, and Arrests Due to Minor Offenses

– Adapted from “Healing Communities in Crisis” (A collaboration of the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the PICO National Network)

A number of very promising intervention strategies specifically designed to reduce urban gun violence have emerged in recent years. A growing body of evidence shows that these programs, when implemented correctly and properly funded, produce impressive, lifesaving results in a short time. We believe by implementing these strategies and expanding their focus to include minor offenses like, loitering, public intoxication, petty vandalism, loud music, and other similar incidents we can safely meet the needs of our communities while both saving life and severely decreasing arrests.

### GROUP VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

The Group Violence Intervention (GVI) strategy is a form of problem-oriented policing that now has an impressive track record of success in a diverse array of American cities. GVI traces its origins back to the mid-1990s, where it was implemented under the name Operation Ceasefire in Boston.<sup>9</sup> At the time, the city was suffering from off-the-charts levels of youth homicide.

Harvard researchers and criminologists, community members, and criminal justice practitioners collaborated to design and implement Operation Ceasefire, which was associated with a 61% reduction in youth homicide.<sup>10</sup> Not only did youth homicide fall by nearly two-thirds in the two years after Ceasefire was implemented, but homicide among all ages citywide fell by about half at a time when there were no equivalent declines in 39 similarly situated cities.<sup>11</sup> This

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<sup>9</sup> Anthony A. Braga et al., “The Boston Gun Project: Impact Evaluation Findings,” May 17, 2000, <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/urbanpoverty/Urban%20Seminar/May2000/BragaBGP%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> See note 22, Kennedy, “Don’t Shoot.”

<sup>11</sup> Anthony A. Braga et al., “Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston’s Operation Ceasefire,” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 38, no. 3 (2001): 195–225, <https://www.innovations.harvard.edu/sites/default/>

incredible result was dubbed the Boston Miracle.

The GVI approach has evolved over the years, although the core model has remained the same, and has now been adopted in cities across the country, including recently in New Orleans, Cincinnati, Oakland, and New Haven. As will be discussed in more detail below, researchers have documented impressive results in nearly every city to embrace and faithfully implement the GVI model. *Healing Communities in Crisis* provides a general overview, but cities looking to implement this strategy should consult directly with the National Network for Safe Communities (nnscommunities.org).

## **HOW GVI WORKS**

At the most basic level, GVI is a four-step, problem-oriented policing strategy that harnesses decades' worth of research in the field of criminology.

1. Form the Team. Convene a local, interagency Working Group consisting of top leaders from community-based organizations (congregations, neighborhood associations, schools etc), social service agencies, and from law enforcement. This Working Group is responsible for implementing and monitoring the GVI strategy.
2. Gather the Data. Identify the individuals and groups most at risk for either committing or becoming victims of gun violence and petty crime. In city after city, there turns out to be a very discrete subset of individuals and groups that are both responsible for, and the victims of, a hugely disproportionate share of gun violence and petty crime. (As noted above, the term "group" is used here instead of "gang" because "gang" is both pejorative and suggests a level of organization and sophistication that is often lacking from the loose affiliations of mainly young men and women that actually drive large portion of urban gun violence and petty crime. The term "group" more accurately captures the nature of these affiliations and does not serve to dehumanize the individuals in question.)
3. Communicate the Message. Invite the identified individuals to a "call-in" where local community members, law enforcement officials, and social service providers convey a powerful message that the shooting must stop. If it does not, law enforcement will use all available mechanisms to bring enforcement actions against the responsible group. The Attendees simultaneously receive a message that the community cares about them and wants to see them alive, safe, and out of prison. To that end, various



social services are offered, and attendees are given a single phone number that will connect them to needed services in the future.

4. Simultaneously, a message is conveyed to the community to contact members of this coalition when they see petty crime instead of calling their local police department. The hope is that these community leaders can help to deescalate situations that would normally lead to a negative interaction with police.
5. Follow Through and Repeat. The next time a homicide is committed, law enforcement follows through with its promise and takes all available legal enforcement action against the responsible group. If petty crime cannot be deescalated by the GVI team, again, the GVI team will call officers. Other call-ins are held until the message is adequately distributed to the intervention population. Progress indicators are tracked and measured. This includes ongoing levels of violence and petty crime, the number of individuals asking for and receiving social services, the number and character of enforcement actions taken, and so forth.

The following sections describe the GVI approach in greater detail and unpack each part of the process. Much more information is available from the National Network of Safe Communities at [nnscommunities.org](http://nnscommunities.org).

### **Forming the Implementation Team**

For a city that is committing to the GVI model, the first step of the process is to put together the team that will implement the intervention. According to the National Network's Implementation Guide,<sup>12</sup> this will vary from locality to locality, but is best accomplished through the cooperation of three primary bodies:

1. An Executive Committee comprised of a select group of local leaders with high-level management experience who are completely committed to implementing the GVI strategy.
2. A Working Group comprised of representatives from the local community (e.g., clergy leaders), law enforcement (e.g., the local police chief), social service providers (e.g., leaders from prominent community-based organizations), and ideally, an outside research group, such as a local college or university.

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<sup>12</sup> "Group Violence Intervention: An Implementation Guide," *National Network for Safe Communities*, accessed Feb. 22, 2016, <http://nnscommunities.org/our-work/guides/group-violence-intervention/group-violence-intervention-an-implementation-guide>.

3. A full-time Project Manager to coordinate the overall effort.

In Boston, for example, the Working Group consisted of Harvard researchers and leaders from several law enforcement agencies, including the Boston Police Department, the Massachusetts departments of probation and parole, the US Attorney's office, ATF, the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, and others. Key community members included black clergy leaders from the TenPoint Coalition, as well as parents of victims of gun violence. Finally, social service providers included group outreach and prevention "streetworkers" attached to the Boston Community Centers program.<sup>13</sup>

Getting full buy-in and energetic support for the GVI model from key groups such as these is an essential ingredient of successful implementation. One of the outstanding experts over the years has proven to be the PICO Network's Live Free Campaign, a national group of faith-based and directly impacted leaders, formerly incarcerated individuals, and young people who organize to reduce gun violence and mass incarceration (livefreeusa.org).

### **Assess and Define the Problem**

With these pieces in place, the next step of the GVI strategy is to assess the community's specific violence problem, in other words, identifying exactly who and what are driving violence locally. In essence, this step involves gathering both quantitative and qualitative data from law enforcement officials and community members who are most familiar with the violence problem. This will include a record of recent violent incidents, names and locations of the most active groups, whether certain groups have known rivalries, the individuals in each group, and so forth.

When this process is complete, it will be possible to identify those most likely to either commit or become the victims of violence. In Cincinnati, for example, this process identified 60 groups with an estimated total membership of 1500 people (less than 0.5% of the city's population) who were associated with 75% of homicides in the city—as victim, perpetrator, or both.<sup>14</sup> The GVI strategy focuses exclusively on these individuals, channeling scarce resources to where they are needed most.

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<sup>13</sup> David M. Kennedy et al., "Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire," *US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and National Institute of Justice*, Sept. 2001, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/188741.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 17.

## The Demonstration Enforcement Action

Once the problem is understood and the most at-risk individuals identified, the next step of the GVI strategy is referred to as the *demonstration enforcement action*. The idea here is to identify a group that is visibly responsible for recent violence or otherwise known in the community for its violent behavior. Once the group and its members are identified, an interagency law enforcement plan is designed to bring highly visible legal actions against the group (generally enforcement actions will be carried out against an entire group because group members have a variety of legal vulnerabilities, including old cases, outstanding warrants, probation violations, or outstanding child support payments— rather than acting on these issues in a seemingly random fashion, the GVI model calls for visible enforcement in response to acts of lethal violence). These actions are to take place shortly before the first of the call-ins with other at-risk individuals.

This step is critical because it demonstrates that a partnership of law enforcement agencies has a new focus on violent behavior and meaningful consequences will result for the responsible groups if the violence continues.<sup>15</sup> Without the demonstration enforcement action as tangible proof of this new reality, the call-in is much less effective.

## The Call-In

A call-in is a formal, in person communication addressed to individuals involved with group-related violence. The message comes primarily from the moral voice of the community—often consisting of local clergy members, neighborhood shooting victims, parents who have lost children to gun violence, and former perpetrators of violence who have managed to turn their lives around—as well as law enforcement officers and social service providers. The core of the message is:

1. The community will not tolerate further violence.
2. At the behest of the community, law enforcement's response to future violence will be swift, sure, and directed at the entire responsible group.
3. A genuine offer of support and help for those who want it.

An effective call-in is generally held at a neutral, non-threatening site of civic importance (e.g., a library or community center), involves a relatively small group

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<sup>15</sup> Id. at 49–53.

of invitees (30 or fewer), does not last more than 90 minutes, and is conducted in a respectful tone. Getting invitees to attend the call-in requires a combination of hand-delivering letters that explain attendees will not be arrested, but need to hear an important announcement, and requiring invitees who may be on probation to attend the call-in as part of their regular reporting. To ensure high attendance, invitees must be given notice at least 1–2 weeks in advance of the call-in.

Community speakers generally include parents of victims and/or formerly incarcerated individuals who have walked away from a life of violence. These speakers help set the tone by underscoring that this process is what the community wants and is not being driven by law enforcement—rather, law enforcement is acting at the behest of the community. This helps to increase the legitimacy of any future enforcement actions.

For law enforcement speakers, the key message is that a new set of rules is now in place and the response to future violence will be certain and aimed not just at the individual who pulled the trigger, but at that individual's entire group. Importantly, this is not a message that other crimes will be ignored, but rather that violent crime will attract an especially intense enforcement reaction upon the whole group.

Social service speakers emphasize the fact that help is available for those who want it and provide a single phone number that attendees may call if they need assistance in the future. Attendees are then asked to return to their peers and relay the message that violence will no longer be tolerated. In this way, the message is spread among the groups most likely to participate in future violence.<sup>16</sup>

### **Follow Through**

The Working Group then meets periodically to ensure that the promises made at the call-in are being carried out. If further acts of violence are committed, law enforcement follows through with enforcement actions against the entire responsible group, not just those involved with the act of violence in question. If new information is received about impending violence—for example, recent threats of retaliation among rival groups—custom notifications to specific individuals may be useful.

Social service groups track which individuals have accessed services and

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<sup>16</sup> Id. at 71–86.

continue to reach out to those who may need further assistance. Examples of this assistance include GED training, tattoo removal (to remove group affiliations and help with job placement), mental health services, locating affordable housing, obtaining a driver's license, and vocational training.

Further group call-ins are conducted until the Working Group is satisfied that the message has reached the desired number of groups and individuals. Intervention goals should be reassessed as new data becomes available.

As the experience with Boston Ceasefire demonstrated, strong commitment to the GVI model over time is a critical element of long-term efficacy.<sup>17</sup> Soon after Boston Ceasefire ended in 2000, youth homicide rates began to climb rapidly—by 2006, youth homicide had increased 160%.<sup>18</sup>

## **WHY GVI WORKS**

The GVI strategy is effective for a number of reasons. First, it is narrowly focused on a specific problem. Rather than trying to address a whole slew of social issues at once, GVI focuses directly on reducing rates of homicide, violence, and petty crime.

Second, GVI is focused on a small and specific group of the most at-risk individuals. An extremely tiny portion of a given area is generally responsible for the majority of that area's gun violence and petty crime. The experience of many different cities across the country establishes that "group members typically constitute less than 0.5% of a city's population but are consistently linked to 60% to 70% of the shootings and homicides."<sup>19</sup> Where both law enforcement and community resources are often limited, GVI works by directing available resources to the root of the violence problem.

Third, the GVI strategy is a genuine partnership between community members, law enforcement, and social service providers—it is not exclusively a law enforcement effort. This increases legitimacy in areas where community/police

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<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 87–99.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony A. Braga, et al., *Losing Faith? Police, Black Churches, and the Resurgence of Youth Violence in Boston*, 6 Ohio St. J. of Crim. Law. 141 (2008), <http://nnscommunities.org/uploads/Braga-PDF.pdf>; see also Mark Moore, "Creating Networks of Capacity: The Challenge of Managing Society's Response to Youth Violence," in *Securing Our Children's Future: New Approaches to Juvenile Justice and Youth Violence*, ed. Gary S. Katzmann (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2002), 338.

<sup>19</sup> See note 49, *National Network for Safe Communities*, "An Implementation Guide," 13.

relations may be extremely strained.<sup>20</sup> A message that the violence needs to stop is not one that is likely to be heard when coming directly from law enforcement, but is more likely to be heeded when coming from respected community members, including former perpetrators of violence who have turned their lives around and local mothers and fathers who have lost children to senseless killings.<sup>21</sup>

As a concrete example, prior to implementing Operation Ceasefire, Boston experimented with an exclusively law enforcement-driven approach to violence that was essentially “a wholesale stop-and-frisk policy aimed at young black men.”<sup>22</sup> This policy drew an incredible amount of resistance from the black community, the courts, and the press. The lesson, according to one of the law enforcement officers that participated in this effort and who later played a key part in Operation Ceasefire, was that “we couldn’t [succeed in reducing violence] alone and we couldn’t do it without support from the community and other agencies. And that [the solution] couldn’t be just policing, or just enforcement; there had to be prevention, too.”<sup>23</sup>

Legitimacy increases when law enforcement actions are perceived by group members to be in response to community demands, rather than coming exclusively from law enforcement. A growing body of research shows that potential offenders are more likely to obey the laws that they perceive as legitimate.<sup>24</sup> The GVI model helps to promote that very kind of legitimacy.

Fourth, the GVI model is based on findings that deterrence actions are most

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<sup>20</sup> Anthony A. Braga and Christopher Winship, “Partnership, Accountability, and Innovation: Clarifying Boston’s Experience with Pulling Levers,” in *Police Innovation: Contrasting Perspectives*, eds. David Weisburd and Anthony A. Braga (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 171–90; see also Tom R. Tyler, 2004. “Enhancing Police Legitimacy,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 593, no. 1 (2004): 84–99, <http://ann.sagepub.com/content/593/1/84.short>.

<sup>21</sup> “The places in which violence is most prevalent too often are the very places in which police-community relations are the most strained.” Tracey L. Meares and Dan M. Kahan, “Law and (Norms of) Order in the Inner City,” 32 (1998): 805–838, [http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss\\_papers/482](http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss_papers/482); see also Chris Melde et. al., “On the Efficacy of Targeted Gang Interventions: Can We Identify Those Most At Risk?,” *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 9 (2011):279–94, <http://yvj.sagepub.com/content/9/4/279>.

<sup>22</sup> See note 50, Kennedy, “Reducing Gun Violence,” 9.

<sup>23</sup> Id. at 10.

<sup>24</sup> Tracey L. Meares, *The Legitimacy of Police Among Young African-American Men* 92 *Marquette L. Rev.* 651 (2009); Anthony A. Braga and David L. Weisburd, “The Effects of Focused Deterrence Strategies on Crime A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Empirical Evidence,” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 49, no. 3 (2012): 323– 58; see also Tom R. Tyler & Jeffrey Fagan, *Legitimacy and Cooperation: Why Do People Help the Police Fight Crime in their Communities?*, 6 *Ohio St. J. Crim. L.* 231 (2008).

effective when punishment becomes more certain.<sup>25</sup> It is not the length of the sentence that matters as much, but rather the certainty that engaging in a particular behavior will result in negative consequences. This “focused deterrence” changes behaviors by effectively communicating (and actively demonstrating) that the rules have changed for group members and continued violent behavior will bring swift and certain enforcement actions, both great (homicide charges) and small (probation violations), that will apply to the entire group—not just the individual who happened to pull the trigger.<sup>26</sup> Group norms are more likely to change when group members understand that one member’s decision to resort to violence will have negative consequences for everyone in the group.

As a result, GVI may provide a model for reducing violence while also lowering levels of mass incarceration. Work done recently in Chicago suggests that call-ins for offenders who have recently left prison and reentered the community have been associated with measurable reductions in recidivism rates.<sup>27</sup>

### **GVI’S STRONG RECORD OF SUCCESS**

Since its inception with Operation Ceasefire in Boston in 1996, the GVI strategy has been implemented in a variety of cities across America and now boasts a very robust and well-documented record of success. Indianapolis adopted GVI in the late 1990s, based on the principles established in Boston. An evaluation of the Indianapolis effort, which was referred to as the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership (IVRP), found that IVRP was associated with a 34% decrease in homicides each month.<sup>28</sup> A follow-up evaluation also confirmed a “statistically significant 38% reduction in gang homicides following the implementation of IVRP.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Steven N. Durlauf and Daniel S. Nagin, “Imprisonment and Crime: Can Both Be Reduced?” *Criminology & Public Policy* 10 (2011): 13–54, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2010.00680.x/abstract>.

<sup>26</sup> Anthony A. Braga and David L. Weisburd, “Focused Deterrence and the Prevention of Violent Gun Injuries: Practice, Theoretical Principles, and Scientific Evidence,” *Annual Review of Public Health* 36 (2015): 55–68, <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031914-122444>.

<sup>27</sup> Andrew V. Papachristos et al., “Desistance and Legitimacy: The Impact of Offender Notification Meetings on Recidivism among High Risk Offenders,” *Social Science Research Network* (2013), doi: 10.2139/ssrn.2240232.

<sup>28</sup> Edmund McGarrell et al., “Reducing Homicide through a ‘Lever-Pulling’ Strategy,” *Justice Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2006): 214–229.

<sup>29</sup> Nicholas Corsaro and Edmund McGarrell, “Testing a Promising Homicide Reduction Strategy: Re-assessing the Impact of the Indianapolis ‘Pulling Levers’ Intervention,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 5 (2009): 63–82.

The city of Stockton, CA, implemented the GVI strategy in 1997 in response to a rise in youth homicide and continued its program, known as Operation Peacekeeper, until the end of 2002. A study of the effects of Operation Peacekeeper compared Stockton with other cities where no GVI strategy had been implemented and found that the intervention was associated with a 42% reduction in monthly gun homicides. Moreover, the study noted that “none of the comparison cities experienced a statistically significant reduction in the monthly count of gun homicides that coincided with the implementation of the Peacekeeper intervention in Stockton.”<sup>30</sup>

Notably, soon after Stockton abandoned its GVI strategy, the city saw an increase in homicides over a period of several years, with overall homicides hitting an all-time high in 2011.<sup>31</sup> After turning back to the strategy in 2012, homicides decreased by 40% and shootings were down by about 50% following the first two years of GVI implementation.<sup>32</sup>

The clear lesson is that long-term commitment to GVI is important in consolidating and sustaining results over time. Compared to the staggering costs of both gun violence, estimated at \$229 billion per year, and incarceration costs of as much as \$60,000 per year *per inmate*, this investment in resources is well-justified.<sup>33</sup>

In 2002, Lowell, MA, implemented a GVI strategy with the help of federal funding from the Department of Justice’s Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative (PSN) in an attempt to address rising gun violence. A study of the intervention found “a statistically significant 44% reduction in the monthly count of gun assault incidents.” At the same time, researchers found that “neither the comparison cities nor the State of Massachusetts experienced a statistically significant reduction in the monthly count of gun homicides that coincided with the implementation of the PSN intervention in Lowell.” In other words, these results

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<sup>30</sup> Anthony A. Braga, “Pulling Levers Focused Deterrence Strategies and the Prevention of Gun Homicide,” *Journal of Criminal Justice* 36, no. 4 (2008): 332–343.

<sup>31</sup> Julia Reynolds, “Lessons from Stockton,” *Monterey County Herald*, Sept. 13, 2009, [https://secure.www.montereyherald.com/portlet/article/html/fragments/print\\_article.jsp?articleId=13328352&siteId=570](https://secure.www.montereyherald.com/portlet/article/html/fragments/print_article.jsp?articleId=13328352&siteId=570); see also John Rudolf, “Stockton’s Poor Mired In Violence After Police Cuts, Recession,” *Huffington Post*, Apr. 3, 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/18/stockton-poor-poverty-crime-california\\_n\\_1346096.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/18/stockton-poor-poverty-crime-california_n_1346096.html).

<sup>32</sup> Stockton Ceasefire: One-Year Implementation Update,” *California Partnership for Safer Communities*, 2014, [http://stockton.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=77&clip\\_id=4746&meta\\_id=390521](http://stockton.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=77&clip_id=4746&meta_id=390521); see also “Issues and Impact: Stockton Ceasefire,” *People and Congregations Together*, accessed Feb. 22, 2016, <http://www.pact4sjc.org/restorative-justice>.

<sup>33</sup> “The Cost of a Nation of Incarceration,” *CBS News*, Apr. 23, 2012, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-cost-of-a-nation-of-incarceration>.



could not be attributed to some wider trend

of statewide violence reduction, but rather were specifically associated with the implementation of the GVI strategy.

Similar results have been observed with GVI programs implemented in recent years:

- Chicago (2002)—23% reduction in overall shooting behavior and a 32% reduction in gunshot victimization for targeted groups compared to similar groups that didn't experience GVI.<sup>34</sup>
- Cincinnati (2007)—35% reduction in monthly group-related homicides and a 21% reduction in monthly total shootings.<sup>35</sup>
- New Haven (2012)—a significant reduction of nearly five group-related shootings and homicides per month.<sup>36</sup>

New Orleans (2012)—17% reduction in overall homicides, 32% reduction in group-related homicides, 26% reduction in homicides that involved young black male victims, and a 16% reduction in both lethal and nonlethal firearms violence.<sup>37</sup> In 2012, researchers for the Campbell Collaboration, an organization that evaluates the efficacy of social intervention programs, conducted an extensive review of the available data and found “strong empirical evidence for the crime prevention effectiveness” of the GVI strategy.<sup>38</sup> This evaluation identified 10 studies that qualified for analysis based on meeting certain design standards and concluded that “nine out of 10 eligible studies reported strong and

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<sup>34</sup> Andrew V. Papachristos and David S. Kirk, “Changing the Street Dynamic: Evaluating Chicago’s Group Violence Reduction Strategy,” *Criminology & Public Policy* 14, no. 3 (2015): 525–558, doi: 10.1111/1745–9133.12139.

<sup>35</sup> Robin S. Engel, Nicholas Corsaro, and Marie Skubak Tillyer, “Evaluation of the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV),” *University of Cincinnati Policing Institute*, 2010, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268415906\\_Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Cincinnati\\_Initiative\\_to\\_Reduce\\_Violence\\_CIRV](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268415906_Evaluation_of_the_Cincinnati_Initiative_to_Reduce_Violence_CIRV).

<sup>36</sup> Michael Sierra-Arevalo, Yanick Charette, and Andrew V. Papachristos, “Evaluating the Effect of Project Longevity on Group-Involved Shootings and Homicides in New Haven, CT,” Working Paper, Institution for Social and Policy Studies, 2015, [http://isps.yale.edu/sites/default/files/publication/2015/10/sierra-arevalo\\_charette\\_papachristos\\_projectlongevityassessment\\_isps15-024\\_1.pdf](http://isps.yale.edu/sites/default/files/publication/2015/10/sierra-arevalo_charette_papachristos_projectlongevityassessment_isps15-024_1.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Nicholas Corsaro and Robin S. Engel, “Most Challenging of Contexts Assessing the Impact of Focused Deterrence on Serious Violence in New Orleans,” *Criminology & Public Policy* 14, no. 3 (2015): 471–505, doi: 10.1111/1745–9133.12142.

<sup>38</sup> Anthony A. Braga and David L. Weisburd, “The Effects of ‘Pulling Levers’ Focused Deterrence Strategies on Crime,” *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 8, no. 6 (2012): 1–90, <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/96/>.

statistically significant crime reductions associated with the [GVI] approach.”<sup>39</sup> Only in Newark, NJ, was there no observable and statistically significant decrease in shootings.

Based on all the available findings, the Campbell Collaboration report recommends “that jurisdictions suffering from gang violence, overt drug markets, and repeat offender problems should add focused deterrence strategies to their existing portfolio of prevention and control interventions. The existing evidence suggests these new approaches to crime prevention and control generate noteworthy crime reductions.”<sup>40</sup>

Another meta-study (i.e., a study of studies) from 2012 reviewed an array of gun violence prevention strategies and concluded that “comprehensive community-based law enforcement initiatives have performed the best at reducing gun violence.”<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the report found that the most effective of these programs “combined both punitive and supportive strategies to effectively reduce gun violence.”<sup>42</sup> The authors of the meta-study concluded by noting that “there is clear promise for programs that attempt to increase both accountability and social support to the program’s participants.”<sup>43</sup> This is exactly the balance of carrots and sticks called for by the GVI model.

Additionally, the Department of Justice has compiled a review of known crime prevention strategies, in which it gives the GVI approach its highest rating, noting the existence of multiple studies confirming GVI’s efficacy.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 25.

<sup>40</sup> *Id.* at 28.

<sup>41</sup> Matthew D. Makarios and Travis C. Pratt, “The Effectiveness of Policies and Programs That Attempt to Reduce Firearm Violence: A Meta-Analysis,” *Crime & Delinquency* 58, no. 2 (2012): 222–244, doi: 10.1177/0011128708321321.

<sup>42</sup> *Id.* at 237.

<sup>43</sup> *Id.*

<sup>44</sup> “Crime & Crime Prevention,” *National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs*, accessed Feb. 22, 2016, <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/TopicDetails.aspx?ID=13>; see also “Community Crime Prevention Strategies,” *US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs*, accessed Feb. 22, 2016, <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/TopicDetails.aspx?ID=10>.