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Community Violence Intervention Groups Rally for Permanent State Funding Hundreds Gather in Springfield as State Budget Takes Shape

Community leaders from across Illinois convened in the state capital today to call on the State of Illinois to permanently fund a 2021 law that has provided much-needed dollars to community violence intervention (CVI) organizations combatting gun violence. At a rally in front of the Lincoln Statue in Springfield, elected officials and community leaders gathered in support of the Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA).

State Representative Justin Slaughter, a sponsor of the law, told the crowd that permanent funding for RPSA will make our communities safer and establish Illinois as a leader in the field of gun violence reduction.

“RPSA is the foundation for a public health approach to addressing gun violence. Our goal is to save lives by preventing shootings from happening instead of simply arresting and incarcerating after the fact,” Slaughter said.

Illinois State Senator Robert Peters, who also sponsored RPSA, said, “We have built the infrastructure needed to take violence prevention to scale. It’s time to broaden our investment and commit for the long term.”

In Chicago, the Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities, an alliance of more than 50 foundations and other funders, the business community through the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, and local governments are collaborating to support and expand a network of CVI organizations serving communities with the highest levels of gun violence.

The goal, announced in February at an [event with the Governor, the Mayor and legislative leaders](#), is to reduce gun violence by 50 percent in the next five years and 75 percent over the next decade, in part, through a dramatic increase in the number of highest risk individuals served by CVI and allied organizations.

Since 2016, the private sector has contributed more than \$300 million in support of CVI. More recently, local and state governments have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to support CVI.

A growing body of research from Northwestern University and the University of Chicago affirms the positive impact of CVI. Advocates for permanent funding for RPSA are seeking more than \$140 million in state funds in the proposed 2025 budget.

Chicago pastor and anti-violence activist Michael Pflieger told the gathering that gun violence must be fought in the same way that we responded to the COVID pandemic. “You can’t just treat people who are infected by the epidemic of gun violence. We need a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of the disease: guns, fear, and a sense of hopelessness among individuals caught up in lives of violence.”

The rally also included remarks from:

- State Senator Elgie Sims
- Sam Castro, Director of Community Violence Intervention, Institute for Nonviolence Chicago
- Craig Nash, Director of Community Engagement, Chicago CRED

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