



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Black & Brown Gun Violence Prevention Leaders Secure Congressional Win with "Break the Cycle of Violence Act" Bill Introduction by U.S. Sen. Booker & U.S. Rep. Horsford

If Enacted by Congress, Legislation Would Secure Investments in Community-Based Violence Reduction Initiatives; Save Lives in Black & Brown Communities

WASHINGTON—Today, [Fund Peace](#)—a coalition of the nation's leading Black and Brown gun violence prevention organizations, experts, and community leaders—applaud and endorse the introduction of the Break the Cycle of Violence Act by U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and U.S. Representative Steven Horsford (D-NV-4).

In the wake of growing mass shootings and gun violence across the U.S. during the pandemic, **the legislation takes the critical steps of streamlining and coordinating the funding allocation for evidence-based community violence intervention programs and creating new programs housed in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to oversee and implement these efforts.**

If enacted, the legislation will save countless lives, particularly in the Black and Brown communities disproportionately impacted by the gun violence epidemic. Gun violence is the [leading cause of death](#) for Black males under 35 and the [second leading cause](#) of death for Latino male and Black female youth. The pandemic has [exacerbated these findings—homicides rose](#) by 30% across 34 cities in 2020, and gun assaults increased by 8%.

Specifically, the Break the Cycle of Violence Act would support community violence intervention efforts through the creation of several new programs that will facilitate administration of funds through activities such as the development of grant solicitations, proposal selection, fund allocation, local site support, and research.

The legislation supports additional programs that have proven to significantly reduce rates of both fatal and non-fatal gun violence, including: *intensive case management, peer support and mentorship, behavioral therapy and counseling, job training and skill building, conflict mediation and crisis response, and relocation away from dangerous circumstances, among others.*

The Fund Peace coalition urges the U.S. House and Senate to swiftly pass the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, and additionally calls on the Senate to support the American Jobs Plan's inclusion of a \$5 billion investment to fund community violence intervention and community-based public safety solutions. Combined, these efforts will provide an unprecedented opportunity to build an infrastructure of peace to heal and disrupt cycles of violence.

Please see below for quotes from leading Fund Peace Black and Brown Gun Violence Prevention Advocates & Experts reacting to the bill's introduction.

To schedule an interview with a Fund Peace gun violence prevention advocate or expert, please contact: Carolyn Backus at cbackus@hamiltonps.com & fundpeace@hamiltonps.com.

Quotes from Fund Peace Coalition Members:

- **Eddie Bocanegra**, Senior Director, [*READI Chicago*](#): "In Chicago and in cities across America, gun violence is devastating Black and Brown communities and compounding a cycle of intergenerational poverty, violence and trauma. By investing in evidence-based community violence intervention programs, the Break the Cycle Act would be a bold first step in reversing this trend and helping our communities heal. If our leaders in Washington truly want to address the racial justice and public health epidemic of gun violence, they will pass the Break the Cycle Act without delay."
- **Shani Buggs, PhD, MPH**, Assistant Professor, [*University of California, Davis Violence Prevention Research Program*](#): "For decades, Black and brown children and families have suffered from the incalculable harms of gun violence, and the pandemic has only compounded the traumas experienced in our most marginalized communities have experienced. Violence interventions that are for and by those communities can save lives and mitigate trauma, but those interventions must be fully and sustainably funded. With the rates of gun violence in 2021, we are now at a state of emergency. Our elected leaders must urgently invest in strategies that will break cycles of violence and bring much-needed peace to our communities."
- **Greg Jackson**, National Advocacy Director, [*Community Justice Action Fund*](#): "This year may be one of the deadliest in history for gun violence. The Break the Cycle of Violence Act will help the lives of those most affected by these tragedies, which are often Black people and people of color. For decades these communities have called for gun violence prevention strategies that went beyond police and being treated like a possible threat. Today, we are one step closer to those calls being answered and innovative gun violence prevention strategies being supported at the federal level. We commend Senator Booker and Congressman Horsford for moving the needle towards a safer and more just society for all Americans."
- **Fatimah Loren Dreier**, Executive Director, [*The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention*](#): "This legislation is an important step toward addressing the public health crisis of gun violence in black and brown communities. Especially now, with rates of gun violence spiking across the country, cities desperately need support from the federal government to implement comprehensive strategies that prevent gun violence and heal the trauma it wreaks on not just individual victims but entire communities."
- **Pastor Mike McBride**, Director, [*Urban Strategies & LIVE FREE Campaign*](#): "After decades of Black and Brown communities being left out of the conversation around gun violence prevention, our demands are being heard in the White House, and now the halls of Congress. The Break the Cycle Act would build on the Biden administration's pledge to invest \$5B in community-led gun violence prevention by providing additional

and consistent funding for desperately needed jobs, healing, and community stabilization. This includes violence intervention outreach, hospital-based intervention programs, and therapeutic programs that support those most traumatized by gun violence. There is a moral imperative for Congress to pass this legislation. Voters overwhelmingly support these investments into peace and healing. There is no time to waste."

- **Anthony Smith**, Executive Director, [Cities United](#): "With the introduction of the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, Sen. Booker and Rep. Horsford provide states and cities with a blueprint for community peace. This bill makes it clear that the federal government will be a true partner in making our communities safe, healthy and hopeful. I urge their peers to quickly pass this act so we can get these much-needed resources and support to our communities."

To contact a member of the Fund Peace coalition, please reach out to Carolyn Backus at cbackus@hamiltonps.com & fundpeace@hamiltonps.com.

To learn more about the Fund Peace Campaign visit: fundpeacenow.com.

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