

Chairs Sollman and Evans and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Teri Mills. I am a registered nurse and I reside in Washington County.

I urge you to please renew Oregon's \$15 million Community Violence Intervention (CVI) fund, administered by DOJ's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division, in the budget. I strongly support prioritizing this funding in the upcoming budget because prevention is the absolute best way to break the cycle of violence. CVI programs focus on reaching the small number of people who are most connected to local cycles of violence and have proved to reduce homicides by as much as 60 percent where they are implemented.¹

Last year, Oregon appropriated \$15 million to these services for the very first time, and we know there is already more demand than funding available. Funding is set to expire in 2024, which would be unfortunate since we are still witnessing untenable violence in our state. If we want to reduce gun violence over the long term, we can't make a one-time investment; we have to make a sustained commitment to strategies we know work to reduce violence.

This includes providing grants to support evidence-informed programs across Oregon. Strategies utilized include job training, employment, and re-entry programs as well as after school programs for our youth. And some of these services are offered right here at Portland Community College and I can attest to the fact that yes, they work!

I hope you agree and will vote yes to include a minimum of \$15 million for these life-saving programs in the state budget.

Thank you,

Teri Mills RN
Tualatin

¹ Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence and PICO National Network, "Healing Communities in Crisis" (San Francisco and Oakland, CA: 2019). Retrieved April 5, 2023 from <https://giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Healing-Communities-in-Crisis.pdf>.