

Submitter: Blair Hennessy  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

Dear Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Blair Hennessy and I live in Portland, Oregon.

I urge you to renew Oregon's \$15 million Community Violence Intervention fund, administered by DOJ's Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division, in the budget.

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. 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.

Grants support evidence-informed programs across the state of Oregon that address many different types of gun violence, from street-based outreach to reduce homicides in Multnomah County to veteran suicide prevention programs in Eastern and Southern Oregon.

I have lost three people in my life to gun violence-- all of them far too young. I have students who are fearful to attend school, and this past week we are on high alert for a potential school shooter. I should not have to live in fear-- wondering if my children's elementary school is next. We must fund anti-gun violence measures to protect our children.

Thank you for supporting these live-saving programs in the state budget.

Blair Hennessy