



CITY OF OAKLAND

## MEMORANDUM

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Date: September 10, 2021

To: City Council and Members of the Public

From: Councilmember Treva Reid, District 7

**Re: RESOLUTION DECLARING GUN VIOLENCE IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND REQUESTING THE ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO DEPLOY RESOURCES TO THE CITY OF OAKLAND'S NEIGHBORHOOD VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

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Dear City Council Colleagues and Members of the Public,

Our community is in a state of emergency. To date, Oakland has experienced 78 gun-related homicides. Of these precious lives lost, 50 were Black, 21 were Latinx, 6 were women, and 31 were killed in East Oakland. As many residents continue to grapple with unemployment, food scarcity, housing instability, and other issues exacerbated by COVID-19, they are also contending with the emotional weight, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and trauma of consistent violence in their neighborhoods. If adopted, my proposed resolution would officially declare gun violence a public health crisis in the City of Oakland and endorse our community advocates' call for the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to deploy funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) into neighborhood violence prevention services.

In Oakland, between 2000 and 2020, 1,762 deaths and 43% of domestic homicides involving a weapon, were gun related. It is important to note that although magnified by our current global health pandemic, gun violence is a long-standing issue within our community. Historical inequities, red lining, under investment in Black and Brown neighborhoods, compounded by deteriorating community relations between police and civilians, racial unrest, and other socioeconomic factors, are all accountable for our current crisis.

This resolution aims to address these conditions by reaffirming Oakland's commitment to preventative public safety measures, as exemplified in its \$18M investment into the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) in the FY 21-23 budget. Nevertheless, while this year's investment into DVP was a long overdue first step, these funds and current departmental capacity are insufficient in dealing with the magnitude of gun violence that our Black and Brown communities are facing in the City of Oakland. In addition to DVP, we must continue to build and advance a

community-centered public safety strategy. With enhanced Ceasefire efforts in East Oakland, I am confident that with the fiscal support of our county partners we will be able to collaboratively develop a multi-pronged solution to the current gun violence in our community.

Recognizing this stark reality, dozens of community organizations including, LIVE FREE USA, Roots Community Health Clinic, The African American Resource Circle, Oakland Frontline Healers, Faith in Action East Bay, Dope Era, Adamika Village and more, have boldly called for the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to funnel ARPA dollars into resources and services that would curtail gun violence. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, the Alameda County the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring gun violence a public health crisis and directed county departments to identify and deploy resources to address neighborhood violence; however, they have yet to commit to community advocates' specific funding request.

It is critical the we join our residents and community partners who are working to secure additional funding support to address one of our longest standing issues, as Oakland experiences the most gun violence within Alameda County. In alignment with our City motto *Love Life*, a declaration against gun violence that pays homage to the late LoEshe Lacy, we must work toward comprehensive and holistic solutions. A declaration of gun violence as a public health crisis within the City of Oakland and a deeper investment into violence prevention measures by the County, will undoubtedly aid in our effort. Therefore, I ask you to join me and our community in supporting this resolution.

Yours in Service,



Councilmember Treva Reid, District 7