INTRODUCTION

HI THERE,

I’m Sawyeh Maghsoodloo, the new State Policy & Communications Director at Community Justice Action Fund (CJAF), and the new author of this digest. Every month I’ll be writing on the latest policy developments in the fight to end gun violence in Black and brown communities.

A BIT ABOUT ME:

My educational background is in public policy, and my professional background is in gun violence prevention research. I hold issue expertise in a range of violence topics such as hate-motivated violence, LGBTQ gun victimization, mass shootings, gun trafficking, and the evidence-based policies that prevent them. As a young elected official in Isla Vista, CA, I survived a mass shooting perpetrated by an incel, which galvanized my work today. I hope you’ll join me in advancing policies that build power in communities most impacted by gun violence.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

September 15th marks the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month. It’s an important month to elevate our mission of ending gun violence in all Black and brown communities. Latinos in the United States are twice as likely to be killed in a gun homicide as white people, more likely to be shot and killed by law enforcement, and more likely to be exposed to violence in cities. Join us next week to talk about gun violence in the Hispanic community and what we can do to address it.

GUN VIOLENCE IN THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
7:00 PM -  8:00 PM CT

SIGN UP HERE
Groundbreaking new polling from Safer Cities found that a vast majority (76 percent) of Americans across the political spectrum support allocating funds from the American Rescue Plan for community violence intervention programs. Support is also high (77 percent) for the creation of government offices of community violence prevention at the local level, separate from the police department.

Cities, counties, and states continue to move to protect their communities by allocating American Rescue Plan funds for community violence intervention programs. A couple of recent wins include Buffalo, NY which approved $6 million for public safety and violence prevention programs, specifically community-based efforts to reduce violence in the communities faced with disproportionately high rates in recent months. Jackson, MI also approved $1.5 million to a local group violence intervention program after the city council voted in favor unanimously. The funding, spread over five years, will first be used to contract experts at John Jay College to design and implement a violence intervention solution specifically made for Jackson.
Stay tuned as we continue to support local governments in their pursuit of making use of this pool of funding for violence prevention.

**DAILY ACTION HOURS**

This week marks our final week of Daily Action Hours, a daily opportunity to make calls to our senators demanding support for these life-saving solutions. Join our community of action takers who make our voices heard and fight for the change we need, every day this week from 12 pm - 1 pm CST.

**YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUNDS**

Young people are more vulnerable than adults to becoming both victims and perpetrators of gun violence—even more so among young people of color. That’s why the White House has included in their American Rescue Plan guidance that cities, counties, and states should allocate a portion of their funds to “expand summer programing, employment opportunities and other services and supports, especially for teenagers and young adults.”

Youth employment programs like summer jobs programs can reduce young people’s involvement in crime by significant levels. A study by the Brookings Institute found that young people with summer jobs had 35 percent fewer charges for violent crimes than those who did not. They also saw improvements in social and emotional skills, job preparedness, and academic aspirations. Youth of color saw the greatest benefits. Another study by the U.S. Office of Justice Programs found that among a large cohort of youth in Chicago, those that participated in a summer job program had
45 percent fewer violent crime arrests the following year. The study also concluded that the social benefits of such programs outweigh the program costs by 11 to 1.

The Department of Labor granted $89 million to pre-apprenticeship opportunities for young people between 16 and 24 years old, including both educational and professional development support. Another $20 million was awarded to expand workforce development programs for youth ages 14 to 21 for summer and after-school employment opportunities. Community Justice is at the forefront of the effort to advocate leaders utilize these ARP and federal funds to resource the programs that are saving lives and reducing gun violence in our communities everyday.
TEXAS SPOTLIGHT

THE GOOD:
Harris County, Texas launched a new gun violence prevention program and a targeted first responder program, both operating parallel to but separate from county law enforcement. The Harris County Gun Violence Interruption Program involves community-based outreach, credible messengers to interrupt violence, hospital-based intervention to quell retaliatory violence, and coordinated care teams to address root causes.

THE BAD:
As of September 1st, Texans can now carry a loaded handgun in public without a license, any firearms training, or even a background check. Earlier this year, Iowa, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and Tennessee also loosened or did away with their permitting requirements. Emerging research shows that states that have weakened their firearm permitting systems see 13 to 15 percent higher rates of violent crime, and 11 percent higher handgun homicide rates.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!
We are excited to announce the launch of our new Community Justice Action Fund Facebook community! This group will broaden our community of leaders, activists, and survivors. We’ll share updates on our work and opportunities to get involved. We want you to join! Click here.

Be sure to follow us on social media if you aren’t already! You can find us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

-------------------

@cjaactionfund

-------------------

CJAF SUPPORTER GROUP

-------------------

www.cjaactionfund.org

COMMUNITY JUSTICE ACTION FUND