Legislation Text

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Urging the U.S. Congress to maintain the proposed $5 billion in funding for gun violence prevention and other community violence interventions in the Build Back Better Act.

WHEREAS, The Build Back Better budget reconciliation bill is a proposed $3.5 trillion dollar bill that focuses on a long list of policies and programs ranging from education to healthcare to housing to climate change; and

WHEREAS, The reconciliation bill is proposed to include landmark funding for community violence intervention programs. That funding is modeled on the federal Break the Cycle of Violence Act, proposes $5 billion over eight years for a competitive grant program to community based organizations and local units of government that develop effective, prevention-oriented violence reduction initiatives, focused on young people at highest risk for violence. These programs promise not only to address the rising tide of gun violence but also to direct meaningful social resources into historically disinvested communities; and

WHEREAS, Community violence intervention programs focus on reducing homicides and shootings by establishing relationships with people at the center of gun violence in our communities. Evidence-informed programs such as hospital-based violence intervention programs and group violence intervention can produce lifesaving and cost-saving results in a short period of time; and

WHEREAS, These programs would identify those at highest risk, coordinate individualized wraparound resources, provide pathways to healing and stability and monitor and support long-term success; and

WHEREAS, The toll that gun violence has taken on communities is not only emotional and physical, but also economic. On average, a single gun homicide generates approximately $448,000 in medical care and criminal justice expenses. In total, gun violence costs the United States $229 billion every year. Meanwhile, the human costs, to victims and their communities, are inestimable; and

WHEREAS, Gun violence is a critical public health and public safety concern that continues to ravage our communities, especially Black and Brown communities, after decades of disinvestment. Philadelphia has already suffered 438 homicides this year, mostly committed with firearms, and is on pace to set an all-time record. It is of utmost importance to fund community violence intervention programs to fight the gun violence epidemic; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, This Council hereby urges the U.S. Congress to maintain the proposed $5 billion in funding for gun violence prevention and other community violence interventions in the Build Back Better Act.