

2021 NATIONAL WEEK OF STUDENT ACTION

**Issue Briefing:
End Gun Violence**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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THE HUMAN RIGHTS ARGUMENT

THE SOLUTION

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END THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS OF GUN VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

CONGRESS MUST PASS THE BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE ACT (H.R. 4836, S. 2671), COMMIT \$150 MILLION ANNUALLY TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS, AND ESTABLISH A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO END GUN VIOLENCE.

Communities require increased support for gun violence intervention and prevention programs, focused on interrupting cycles of violence, and increased funding for direct services including mentorship to individuals at high risk of engaging in gun violence. These types of cost-effective programs have proven to be highly effective at reducing gun violence and saving lives. Further, taking these critical steps to reduce and prevent firearm homicides is not only good for our communities, it will also decrease the economic burden on our health care and criminal justice systems, quickly paying dividends for taxpayers and communities. With sustained investment into these programs, combined with a national comprehensive strategy aimed at reducing gun violence, particularly in communities of color, the U.S. can make inroads to reducing gun violence in all communities.

BACKGROUND:

Communities of color have a long and complicated history of disadvantage and marginalization in the U.S., which contributes to the disparate impact of firearm homicides and injuries. Unfortunately, disproportionately impacts communities of color, particularly young black men. Firearm homicide was the leading cause of death for black men and boys aged 15-34 in 2018 and the third-leading cause of death for Latino men and boys in the same age range.

By focusing efforts on a concentrated group and engaging community members in providing direct services and mentorship to individuals at higher risk of engaging in gun violence, many cities have made significant progress to reducing violence and creating safe communities. Importantly, the design and implementation of these programs must include human rights safeguards including the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to privacy, and the right to due process.

ADDRESS GUN VIOLENCE BY INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES:

Research indicates that sustained funding for evidence-based projects, tailored for specific local contexts, and working in partnership with the affected communities, can achieve significant and long-lasting reductions in firearm violence. A number of federal and state-funded violence intervention and reduction programs, and accompanying strategies, have proven effective in decreasing gun violence in communities. That is why Amnesty International USA is calling for Congress to authorize at least \$150 million in annual investment to effective violence intervention programs that provide group violence and hospital-based interventions along with evidence-based street outreach programs, all of which have all proved integral to reducing gun violence in communities.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

RightsNow!

May 2020

Visit [amnestyusa.org/NWSAchecklist](https://www.amnestyusa.org/NWSAchecklist)

The Problem

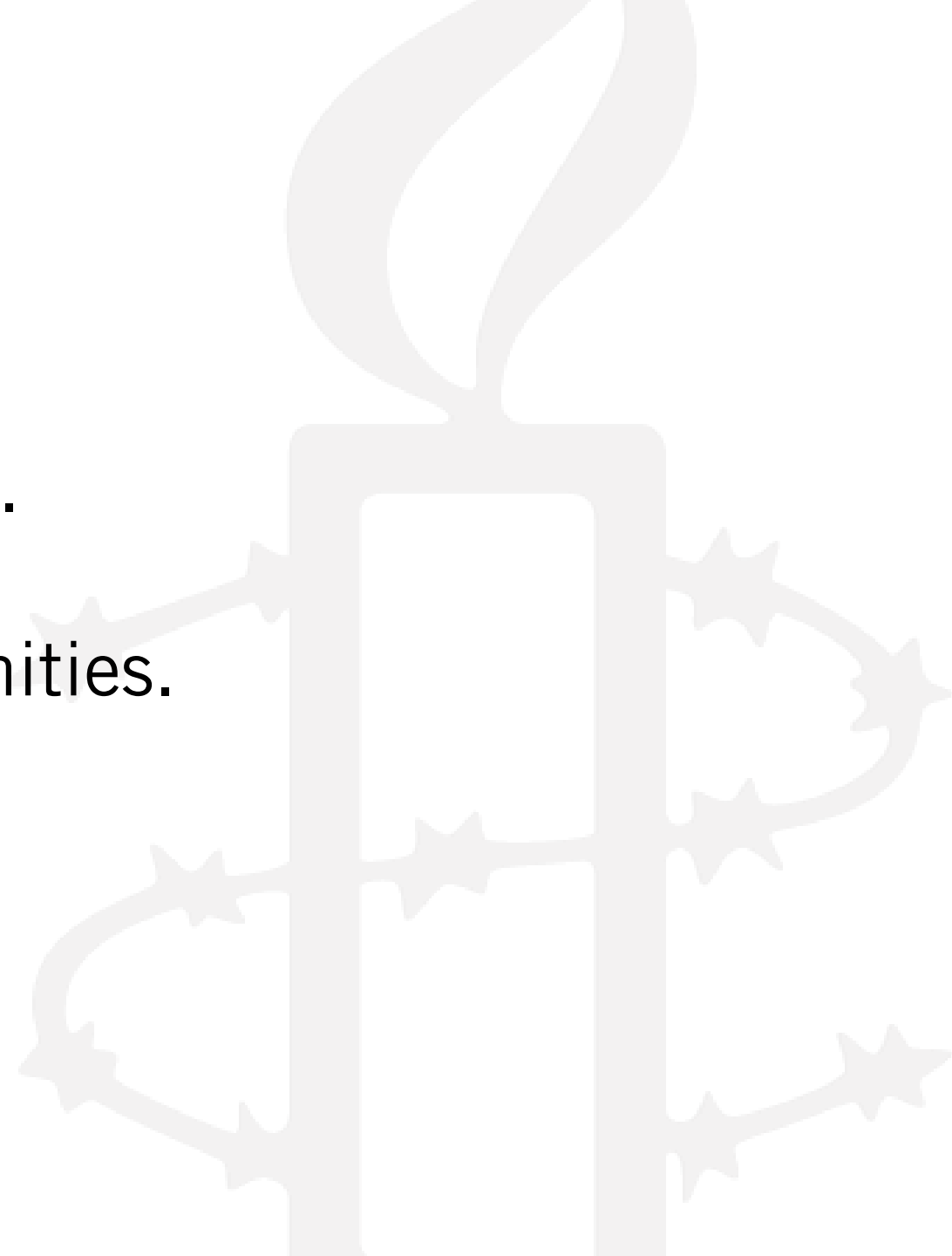


Gun violence in the U.S. is a human rights crisis

- 109 people a day killed, on average.
- In 2019, ~40,000 people died as a result of gun violence.
- Over 400 mass shootings.
- The U.S. has both the highest absolute and highest per capita rates of gun ownership in the world.

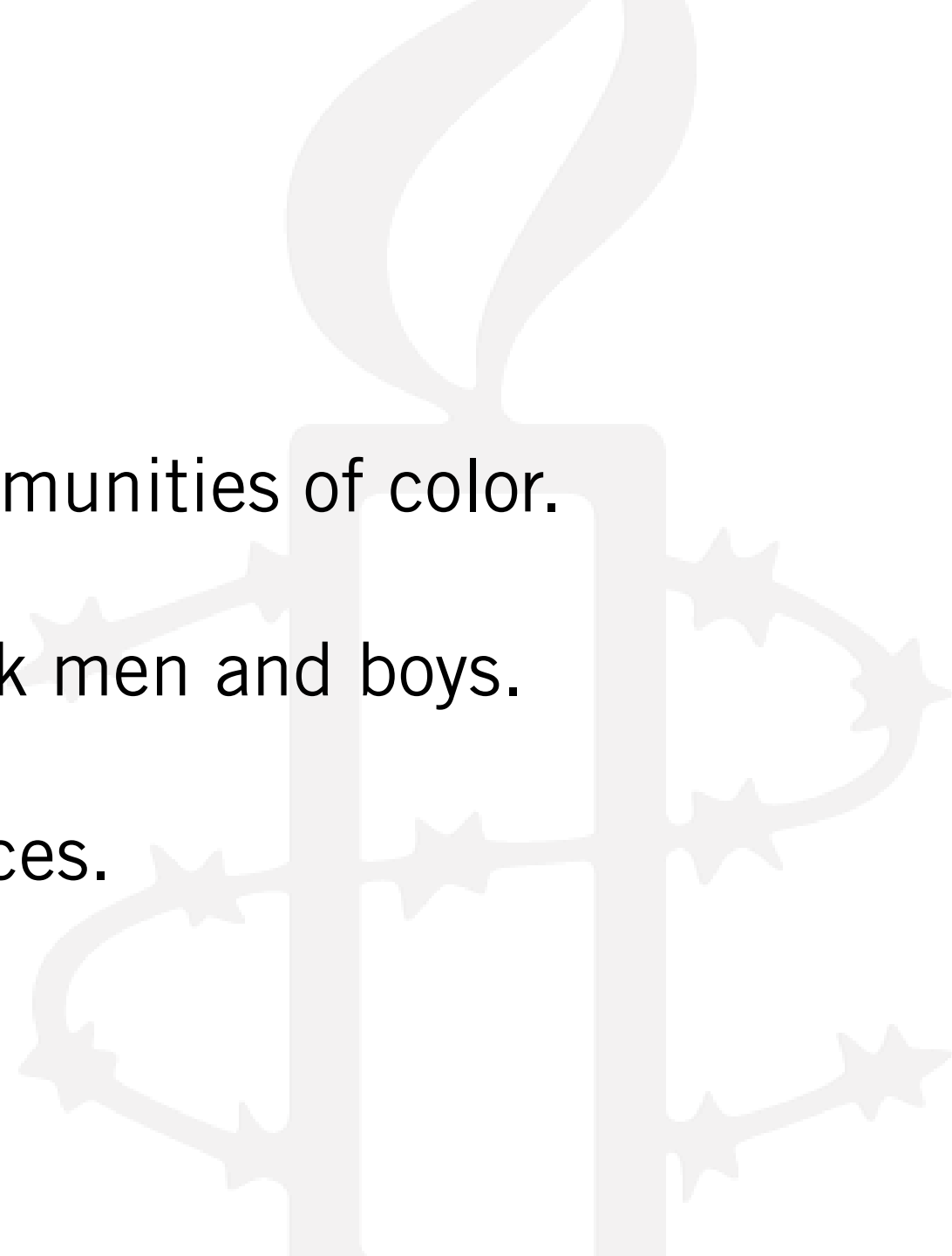
The U.S. is failing

- No working system of regulation.
- Not enough funding for communities.



A Complex Problem

- Disproportionate impact on communities of color.
- Leading cause of death for Black men and boys.
- Decreased access to basic services.



“

*We don't have enough resources. When I sit down with these kids I notice- they just want stability. They want a job. They say to me: "I just want a place to lay my head every day where I will have light and food." It is that basic. For me- this is personal. I have nine friends- close friends- people I talk to everyday that have lost their children to gun violence. Two of them have lost both of their children. My son has been caught in the crossfire before- but luckily he is still here- so you know- everyday I wake up and **I just pray I can save a life.***

— **Mar'yum Patterson**
Trauma Liaison
Cleveland Peace Alliance

The Human Rights Argument

Human Rights Obligations

Right to live, security of person, and be free from discrimination.

The U.S. is failing, but not beyond hope.

Implement a system that restricts access to firearms.

Implement violence reduction or protection measures.

The Solution



Our Communities **NEED** Support

We need to fund violence intervention and prevention programs.

Highly effective at reducing gun violence and saving lives.

\$625 million in annual investment for 8 years & a national strategy.

Community Violence Prevention

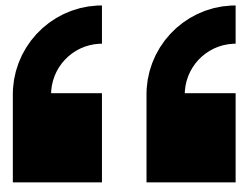
A faint, light gray background graphic on the right side of the slide. It depicts a lit candle with a flame at the top, and a vertical post with several strands of barbed wire wrapped around it. The candle and post are positioned behind the horizontal lines of the text.

Make inroads to reduce gun violence.

Focus on engaging community members.

Lack of political will.

Engage impacted community.



*The thing is- legislation alone won't solve our issue- investment will. Racism, systemic oppression- America will have to invest in its communities and in programs like BRAVE to make real change. We are important because these kids are in high school and they are either going to be a perpetrator of gun violence or a victim or both. They will either be behind a gun or in front of it- or both. **Programs like BRAVE are critical because we are there with them- we are in their faces and we give them a chance to see more.***

— **Lamar Johnson**
*Violence Prevention Coordinator
BRAVE Youth Leaders, Chicago*

Examples of Community Based Violence Intervention Programs

①

Operation Ceasefire Model

②

Cure violence model

③

Hospital-based interventions

④

Richmond Fellowship Model

**What are we
asking Congress
to do?**

A Victory: President Biden's Recovery Plan

- The President has included \$5 Billion for evidence-based community violence prevention programs in his Recovery package in response to direct advocacy from leaders of color.
- We need to keep the pressure on Congress to protect this funding as the bills advance AND to support the Break the Cycle of Violence Act.

Congress should:

- Authorize \$625 million per year, for 8 years, to community gun violence prevention and intervention programs

How did we get to that number?

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \$43,200 & & \times & & 19,234 & = & \$827 \text{ million a year} \\ \downarrow & & & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ \text{(Medical cost of gunshot injury)} & \times & \text{(three-year annual average for gun} & = & \text{or } \$6.6 \text{ billion} & \text{for an eight-year} & \\ & & \text{homicides in U.S.)} & & \text{period.} & & \end{array}$$

- If we prioritize the **48 cities with the largest absolute number of homicides per capita**, the number can be adjusted to **\$627 million a year**.
 - Over an eight-year period that amounts **\$ 5.3 billion**.
- Pass the Break the Cycle of Violence Act

What does the Break the Cycle of Violence Act do?

- Provide Federal grants to communities.
- Authorize earmarked funds for annual investment for violence intervention programs.

Targets



**How do I learn
more?**



**Important
Resources**

EGV Backgrounder

EGV Leave Behind

Additional Resources



Questions

Visit heroes.amnestyusa.org

THANK YOU

