



June 30, 2021

Dear Senator:

Re: Co-sponsor Break the Cycle of Violence Act (S. 2275)

Amnesty International USA urges you to co-sponsor the Break the Cycle of Violence Act ([S. 2275](#)). Introduced on June 24 by Sen. Booker, S. 2275 would authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to build safer thriving communities by investing in community-based violence reduction initiatives. Importantly S. 2275 would include \$5 billion funding (over eight years) to support community gun violence intervention programs, as requested by the President in the American Jobs Plan.

If passed and enacted into law, S. 2275 would provide funding for federal grants to communities that experience 20 or more homicides per year and have a homicide rate at least twice the national average, or to communities that demonstrate a unique and compelling need for additional resources to address gun and group-related violence. S. 2275 would transform community violence intervention programs nationwide and would reduce gun violence in Black and Brown communities across the U.S.

In 2020-21 the COVID-19 pandemic fueled the highest number of gun homicides in over 20 years. This public health and human rights crisis disproportionately impacts Black and Brown communities. Gun homicides are the leading cause of death among Black men ages 15–34 and the second-leading cause of death for Latino men and boys of the same age range.

There are evidence-based approaches for dramatically reducing the increase of gun violence. These approaches have been around for many years and have proven track records of success in many cities. What has always been sorely lacking, however, is a strong federal commitment to scaling a comprehensive infrastructure commensurate with that magnitude of the gun violence crisis.

Effective community-based programs narrowly focus on the tiny percentage of individuals at highest risk to shoot or be shot and, in life-giving ways, work to prevent shootings from happening in the first place. The most effective programs are typically linked to broader systems of city or county-wide support that integrate public health, economic development, public safety, and community-based agencies.

Amnesty International USA is counting on your solid support of Break the Cycle of Violence Act, so we can get this critical bill across the finish line. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Joanne Lin at 202/281-0017 or jlin@aiusa.org.

Sincerely,



Joanne Lin
National Director, Advocacy and Government Affairs



Ernest Coverson
Campaign Manager, End Gun Violence