



November 18, 2021

**Re: Amnesty International USA Recommends a YES Vote on the Build Back Better Act and Supports Funding for Community Violence Intervention Programs**

Dear Representative:

Amnesty International USA strongly urges you to vote YES on H.R. 5376, Build Back Better (“BBB”) Act, this week as a critical step in the battle to end gun violence.

H.R. 5376 includes \$5 billion funding (over eight years) to support community violence intervention (“CVI”) programs, as requested by President Biden in his American Jobs Plan. H.R. 5376 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. H.R. 5376 would transform CVI programs nationwide and would reduce gun violence in Black and brown communities. CVI programs include street outreach, community call-ins, and hospital intervention providing gun violence survivors and families with counseling, support, and mediation. Studies have demonstrated the lifesaving value of CVI programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has 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 and boys ages 15–34 and the third-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 CVI 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.

We urge you to vote for the BBB Act (H.R. 5376) and deliver critical, life-saving CVI programs to Black and brown communities across the country. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Joanne Lin at 202/281-0017 or [jlin@aiusa.org](mailto:jlin@aiusa.org).

Sincerely,



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National Director  
Advocacy and Government Affairs



Ernest Coverson  
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End Gun Violence