

**THE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON GUN VIOLENCE IN THE EAST BAY**

WELCOMES YOU TO AN INFORMATIONAL HEARING

**PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES TO ADDRESSING  
GUN VIOLENCE IN THE EAST BAY**

**FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2013**

**9 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

**FIRST FLOOR AUDITORIUM**

**1515 CLAY STREET**

**OAKLAND, CA 94612**

**SELECT COMMITTEE:**

**ROB BONTA, CHAIR**

**TRAVIS ALLEN**

**JOAN BUCHANAN**

**SUSAN TALAMANTES EGGMAN**

**JIMMY GOMEZ**

**ISADORE HALL, III**

**BILL QUIRK**

**NANCY SKINNER**

**BOB WIECKOWSKI**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE  
OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER ROB BONTA AT (510) 286-1670.**

**THE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON GUN VIOLENCE IN THE EAST BAY  
'PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES TO ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE IN THE EAST BAY'**

**FIRST FLOOR AUDITORIUM  
1515 CLAY STREET  
OAKLAND CALIFORNIA  
9:00am – 12:00PM**

**FRIDAY MAY 17, 2013**

*City of Richmond Neighborhood Safety Director DeVone Boggan was asked to participate in a panel discussion entitled "East Bay Prevention Strategies." Director Boggan was asked to specifically address strategies to identify vulnerable populations. Below please find a complete copy of his remarks:*

Good Morning Honorable Chair and Committee Members.

My name is DeVone Boggan. I serve as Neighborhood Safety Director for the City of Richmond and Director of its Office of Neighborhood Safety.

Cities struggling with high levels of gun violence require viable non-law enforcement opportunities that can effectively contribute to reducing firearm assaults. Such opportunities must seek out, find, engage, partner with and empower those identified as catalysts and/or instigators of such violence. Note, these are young men who are in most instances **known** [suspected] active firearm offenders who have avoided sustained criminal consequences. That is to say, they are walking our streets and at most times left isolated and idle, and left to their own devices when conflicts that can lead to gun violence arise.

In this work, with this population I have learned that "To believe is to be strong, to Doubt cramps healthy energy, Belief is power, and it is a wicked thing to be without HOPE". A robust menu of service options MUST BE made Available! From the lens of the service user, the services offered MUST BE Credible, Legitimate, Respected and Responsive in order to effectively address the mentalities that give rise to such destructive behaviors. A "Real Alternative" must be provided!

Our goal cannot solely be the identification of the vulnerable populations, but also to ensure that once we have them identified, that we actually have something substantive for them that can begin to penetrate the destructive mentalities, root issues, and ones motivating factors for perpetrating gun violence (i.e., anger, fear, and pain).

As a beginning, and as community healers, we must embrace the following values and beliefs: Victims and perpetrators of gun violence and their family members are people of value and worth; the power of love and listening can turn lives in a new direction; trusting relationships can heal people, goodwill influences behavior and, the Relationship is the intervention - the intervention is the relationship!

The Richmond Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) - (a good “systems change” example/model) was created in October 2007. ONS is a non-law enforcement agency situated within Richmond city government focused solely on reducing gun violence. The ONS coordinates and provides targeted intervention services for those identified as active firearm offenders who have avoided sustained criminal consequences. More specifically, the ONS provides attention intensive focus on those walking our streets who we believe to be catalysts and/or instigators for gun violence in Richmond.

To accomplish our goals, the ONS employs two (2) primary strategies: A Focused Street Outreach Strategy and The Operation Peacemaker Fellowship:

Through our street outreach strategy, the city’s street outreach team aka Neighborhood Change Agents or “NCAs” on a daily rotation directly engages those who are identified to be at highest risk for involvement in gun violence on a face-to-face basis. NCAs are city employees who work to build healthy and consistent relationships with this target population - they serve as mentors and credible messengers of healthy information. NCAs work to expand access to quality opportunities, resources, and services that build on the identified populations strengths in an effort to reduce their likely involvement in gun violence.

The Operation Peacemaker Fellowship was launched in 2010. The Fellowship is a unique partnership, empowerment and services instrument designed for those most [lethal] active firearm offenders who have avoided sustained criminal consequences. These young men are most resistant to change and/or are chronically unresponsive to the traditional range of services offered or available in Richmond and most other communities.

By partnership, I mean the city actively seeks to partner with those who have the greatest influence over reducing gun violence - those who are most responsible for it. By empowerment, I mean creating the conditions, opportunity and space for these young men to assist the city, provide leadership, take responsibility and be held accountable for reducing injury associated with firearm assaults. By services, I mean creating service and support mechanisms that are credible, legitimate, respected, responsive and often customized to those with whom we are focusing and partnering.

One ONS goal is to create an addiction to life and/or a desire to live mentality, a sense of self-efficacy, a sense of hope, and the idea that despite your past or your challenges - you CAN get back on track and possibly accomplish some extraordinary things. We are seeing that when one desires to live, one makes healthier decisions. The fact is, there are conflicts happening today in Richmond that could lead to gun violence. Fellows are making better decisions when confronted by these conflicts. As a result of our city’s combined efforts - Richmond has experienced a 45% reduction in firearm related homicides and a 44% reduction in firearm related assaults since the launching of the Operation Peacemaker Fellowship.

We are grateful to the young men who participate in the Operation Peacemaker Fellowship. Our theory of change concludes that we as a city must partner in new ways with those who can best influence the elimination of the gun violence that occurs here. It is they that must decide to stop shooting. The Fellows help us to do something that we in past years have demonstrated that we cannot accomplish without them. Our work is designed to empower and advance that necessary help forward.

In 2012, the City of Richmond recorded the lowest number of firearm assaults and homicides in more than a decade, and celebrates a 61% reduction from 2007 when the Office of Neighborhood Safety was created.

Our Mantra at the ONS is ‘The best way to predict the future is to create it – when one truly desires to live, better decisions are made, lives are changed, and conditions are created that help to transform a city’

The difference we make can be unfocused or powerful, oversold or indispensable, recreational or transformational...we get to decide.

PRESENTATION IMPACT POINTS: TO [END] SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE WITH SUSTAINED RESULTS

\*(ASSUMING THE RISK MAKER HAS BEEN ABLE TO AVOID SUSTAINED CRIMINAL CONSEQUENCES)

POINT 1:

CITIES MUST FOCUS ON THOSE WHO CREATE THE GREATEST RISK FOR ITS COMMUNITIES MOST IMPACTED BY GUN VIOLENCE. WITH A SPIRIT OF HUMANITY, COMPASSION AND COURAGE - WE MUST SEEK, FIND AND ADEQUATELY SERVE THE RISK MAKER;

POINT 2:

CITIES MUST TAKE THE LEAD IN CREATING PLATFORMS THAT ENSURE THAT THE IDENTIFIED RISK MAKER IS PROVIDED NON-LAW ENFORCEMENT ATTENTION INTENSIVE ENGAGEMENT, RECOGNIZING THAT POSITIVE EXAMPLES, INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION, AND ADVICE COMBINED WITH REDUCED IDLENESS AND ISOLATION ON THE PART OF THE RISK MAKER CREATES HEALTHY OUTCOMES;

POINT 3:

(PARTENRING) WORKING WITH/EMPOWERING THOSE BELIEVED TO BE MOST INFLUENTIAL TO REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE IS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT AND SUSTAINED REDUCTIONS;

POINT 4:

'REAL ALTERNATIVES' MUST EXIST – CUSTOMIZED, CREDIBLE, LEGITIMATE, RESPECTED AND RESPONSIVE SERVICE MECHANISMS THAT MOTIVATE ONE TOWARDS - 'A DESIRE TO LIVE AND LET LIVE' MENTALITY;

POINT 5:

ACCEPT THAT THE STATUS QUO COSTS US A LOT MORE THAN WHAT EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVES WILL COST US

[POINTS 1 - 4] ...we cannot police and/or arrest our way out of this problem.

POINT 6:

ROBUST EVALUATION AND COURSE CORRECTION – ONGOING PROCESS.

Thank You.