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**Lt. Gov. Austin Davis Highlights Investments in Community-Based Programs That Are Making Pennsylvania Safer**

*LG Davis Joins Law Enforcement and Health Care Workers at Reading Hospital, Which Recently Received \$600,000 in State Funding for Hospital-Based Violence Prevention*

*Shapiro-Davis Budget Increases Funding for Successful Violence Intervention and Prevention Program by \$10 Million*

**WEST READING, PA** – Lt. Gov. Austin Davis heard today from law enforcement officials, victims service providers and health care workers at Reading Hospital, which recently was awarded more than \$600,000 in state grant funding to expand and enhance its hospital-based violence intervention program.

“Gun violence is something we can – and indeed, must – do something about,” said **Davis**, who leads the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). “I want to commend local law enforcement for [the work you’ve done to reduce the number of homicides in Berks County](#), but I also know that one act of gun violence is one too many. Every Pennsylvanian deserves to be safe and feel safe, whether you live in West Reading or West Hamburg. We’ve been making progress on the issue of gun violence, in Reading, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and many other cities and communities, but there is still much more work to be done.”

PCCD recently approved [\\$45 million in Violence Intervention and Prevention \(VIP\) grants](#).

- Reading Hospital is receiving \$622,649 to expand and enhance its Violence Recovery Program. Key activities include engaging violently injured patients who seek care at Reading Hospital at the bedside or soon after Emergency Department discharge, screening and assessing patients for eligibility, and case management and wraparound services including referrals to community-based organizations.
- In addition, the Salvation Army (Reading) is receiving \$487,509 to continue the Reading Corps’ Trauma-informed Violence Prevention Program, which offers community-based support groups and “family nights” for children impacted by violence and trauma in Berks County.

The proposed 2025-26 state budget includes a \$10 million increase for the VIP program, as well as \$10 million more for the Building Opportunity through Out-of-School Time (BOOST) program, which provides funding for afterschool programs that help keep kids safe and give them enrichment opportunities.

"The Shapiro-Davis Administration and the state legislature have worked hand-in-hand to make meaningful investments that improve safety in Pennsylvania communities," said **state Sen. Judy Schwank**. "The Violence Intervention and Prevention Grant Program is one tool we have to support providers like the Reading Hospital, which is working to establish proactive measures to prevent violence in our community and aid victims."

"The safety and well-being of Berks County residents is a top priority, and investments like these are essential in making real change," said **state Rep. Johnny Cepeda-Freytiz**. "The Shapiro-Davis Administration's commitment to violence prevention and youth enrichment programs will have a direct impact on our communities. The funding awarded to Reading Hospital's Violence Recovery Program will provide critical support to those affected by violence and help break cycles of harm. I'm proud to stand with leaders who prioritize real solutions for safer neighborhoods and a brighter future for our youth."

Grant solicitations for the VIP, BOOST and Collaborative Community Violence Intervention (CCVI) programs received an overwhelming response with 478 applications submitted requesting more than \$174 million — more than three times the current allocation of \$56.5 million in funding.

Since the Shapiro-Davis Administration took office in January 2023, the Administration has been laser-focused on reducing the epidemic of gun violence across Pennsylvania. Some of PCCD's additional initiatives to reduce gun violence include:

- Awarding \$85 million in violence intervention and prevention funding for 131 VIP and CCVI strategies grant projects.
- Reestablishing [Pennsylvania's Office of Gun Violence Prevention](#), after Governor Shapiro signed Executive Order 24-02 last September. Since that time, the Office has conducted four listening sessions and gathered insights from more than 800 Pennsylvanians on the impact of gun violence in their communities.
- [Securing \\$4 million](#) in federal Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative Grant funds to expand hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) statewide.
- Providing over 800 technical assistance sessions to 135 community-based gun violence organizations receiving PCCD grant funding through the [PA Peace Alliance](#).



*State Sen. Judy Schwank, Lt. Gov. Austin Davis and state Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz at today's roundtable; additional photos/video are available at [PACast.com](https://www.pacast.com)*

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