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In Franklin County, Lt. Gov. Austin Davis Highlights New Budget Proposal's Investments to Make Pennsylvania Communities and Schools Safer

Shapiro-Davis 2026-27 Budget Proposal Increases Funding for Violence Intervention and Prevention Program, BOOST Initiative for Afterschool and Summer Programs That Keep Kids Safe

Since the Shapiro-Davis Administration Took Office, Violent Crime Is Down Across the Commonwealth

CHAMBERSBURG, PA – Following the Governor's budget address yesterday, **Lt. Gov. Austin Davis** visited Franklin County today to showcase how the Shapiro-Davis Administration's investments in violence prevention have made Pennsylvania communities and schools safer over the last three years. The 2026-27 Shapiro-Davis budget proposal builds on that work to improve public safety and increases funding for successful violence prevention programs like the Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) program and BOOST (Building Opportunity through Out-of-School Time) initiative.

Lt. Gov. Davis hosted a roundtable conversation at the Chambersburg Memorial YMCA to hear from local leaders and those who are doing the work, on the ground, to address youth violence, support victims of crime and make our communities safer.

"Over the past three years, we've made tremendous strides to reduce gun violence in Pennsylvania and make our communities safer," said **Davis, who leads the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)**. "[Across the Commonwealth, violent crime went down and clearance rates went up from 2022 to 2024](#) – but even one life lost to gun violence is one too many. We must keep pushing forward to make every community and every school safer here in Pennsylvania."

In the BOOST initiative's first year, the Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs received a \$1.5 million grant on behalf of 14 local YMCAs, including the Chambersburg Y, to provide safe, supervised and structured programming for more than 15,000 youth across the Commonwealth. The Chambersburg Memorial YMCA served more than 400 young people through their summer fun club and nearly 300 in afterschool programs.

"The Chambersburg Memorial YMCA is deeply committed to providing safe, supportive spaces for the youth in our community, whether through daily facility access or structured programming," said **Carla Christian, Executive Director of the Chambersburg Memorial YMCA**. "BOOST funding is enabling us to nearly double our enrollment capacity for our existing summer day camp outreach program. It also

expands our ability to offer meaningful field trips and creative learning experiences that help bridge the summer learning gap and keep kids engaged, inspired and connected.”

Since the beginning of the Shapiro-Davis Administration, violent crime has declined across much of the Commonwealth. According to Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data, homicides are down 35 percent since 2022, firearm-related crimes are down 40 percent and assaults are down 26 percent. Over the past three years, the Shapiro-Davis Administration has provided funding for nearly 2,000 additional police officers and expanded investments in afterschool and community-based violence intervention programs – producing real results and addressing the root causes of crime.

The 2026–27 budget builds on this progress with continued investments in law enforcement and proven prevention programs.

This budget includes \$68.3 million for the VIP program — a \$5.2 million increase — and adds \$1 million to the BOOST initiative, bringing total BOOST funding to \$12.5 million to support afterschool and summer programming.

In addition, the Shapiro-Davis budget continues to invest in safer, healthier schools by providing \$100 million in school safety and mental health grants for public schools. Fannett-Metal School District Superintendent **Dr. Tara Will** discussed how these grants have helped students in the district.

"The investments made through the Shapiro-Davis budget have been critical in helping the Fannett-Metal School District create a safer, healthier learning environment for our students," said **Dr. Will**. "These resources allow us to strengthen school safety measures, expand student support services, and address both physical and mental well-being. Without this funding, many of these important safety initiatives simply would not be possible."

The Shapiro-Davis Administration is continuing to prioritize support for victims of crime, so they can recover and heal. Through the Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) and related services, PCCD helps victims cover medical care, counseling, relocation, lost wages, funeral expenses and crime scene cleanup. From 2023 through March of 2025, PCCD has paid more than 16,000 VCAP claims totaling \$29 million in eligible expenses for residents across all 67 Pennsylvania counties. However, the VCAP program is unable to keep up the current demand, and without a stable, long-term funding source, PCCD's ability to serve victims is at risk. That's why the 2026–27 budget calls for a revenue increase to establish stable, long-term funding for VCAP.

"For victims of crime in Franklin and Fulton counties, the aftermath can be overwhelming," said **Barb Channing, executive director of Women In Need (WIN) Victim Services**. "The investment in VCAP, by the Shapiro-Davis Administration, is more than just a budget line: it's a lifeline. As a local victim services provider, I welcome this commitment to extended funding as it provides survivors in our communities the support they need to heal, regain stability and move forward with dignity."

PHOTO

Lt. Gov. Austin Davis speaks at today's event; additional photos/video are available at PACast.com.

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