

Dear Legislators,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed law, House File 2532, which seeks to eliminate violence prevention grants from the State of Minnesota. As the Chief of Police for Brooklyn Park, and the Community Intervention Manager, we understand firsthand how critical these funds are to our efforts in reducing violent crime and promoting public safety.

In the City of Brooklyn Park, violence prevention and intervention work is deeply embedded in our public safety strategies. We have seen, time and again, that addressing the root causes of violent crime, such as poverty, trauma, and social isolation, requires more than just traditional law enforcement approaches. It requires an active, community-based approach to engage with individuals at the highest risk of committing violent crimes or becoming victims of violence. This work is not a replacement for enforcement or accountability, it is a vital complement to those efforts, working to interrupt cycles of violence before they escalate.

The interventions we provide are intentionally focused on individuals identified as having a high likelihood of becoming involved in violent behavior. Our intervention specialists build trust within the community, connect individuals with resources to help them make better decisions, and provide pathways to break free from violent lifestyles. This comprehensive approach helps to reduce crime in ways that traditional policing alone cannot achieve. It provides hope and healing in communities that have long been underserved by being a consistent resource employed to serve the communities they live, work, and worship in.

To ensure productivity and measure effectiveness, the City of Brooklyn Park has shifted to employing all of our intervention workers directly. We no longer distribute funds to outside community organizations or individuals to perform this work. This structure guarantees oversight, accountability, and ensures that funds are used effectively to achieve measurable outcomes in violence reduction.

Eliminating funding for these vital services through House File 2532 would be devastating for Brooklyn Park and the communities we serve. Brooklyn Park, like many cities in Minnesota, has been disproportionately impacted by crime, and it continues to be under-invested in by the state. These grants are crucial to the work that has proven effective in reducing violence and providing long-term solutions. Without this funding, we risk a resurgence of violent crime and further disenfranchisement of the very communities that need the most support.

We urge you to reconsider this legislation and recognize the importance of violence prevention grants in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our communities. These funds are not just an investment in reducing crime, they are an investment in the future of our residents and the long-term health of our city.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We remain committed to working collaboratively with you to ensure a safer, more equitable Minnesota for all.

Sincerely,

Mark Bruley
Chief of Police
City of Brooklyn Park

LaTreasure Dickson, MHA
Community Intervention Manager
City of Brooklyn Park