

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

GUN VIOLENCE INTERRUPTION

- To address the problem of gun violence, CAJM pressed the city commission to invest \$1-million dollars per year over the next five years into a proven national gun violence interruption program.
- We are at the end of the first year and during this time, the city began to negotiate a contract with the Group Violence Intervention(GVI) program, a national evidence-based framework for reducing gun violence. The contract was not finalized because TPD said they did not have the resources to commit to the work outlined in the contract. When this was revealed, the city commission voted to give the money (\$300k over two years) that was going to go to GVI to the Commission on the Status of Men and Boys.
- CAJM is supportive of the CSMB. Rev. A.J. Mealor represents CAJM on the CSMB's workgroup. They have engaged the National Institute of Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) and the FSU College of Criminology and Criminal Justice to assist with their planning process to reduce gun violence. Recommendations will be presented to the workgroup on 10/13/23.
- CAJM will support the national evidence-based program that is selected and continue to advocate for the \$1-million dollars to be spent in support of the chosen program.
- At the same time, we have work to do to press the city to adopt a gun violence interruption policy that uses geographic-specific intervention methods, targets the small population of known shooters, enhances police-community relations, and interpersonal conflicts that lead to instances of gun violence.

CIVIL CITATIONS

- The city and county have a program called civil citations that became state law in 2018 to ensure that children under the age of 18 who commit a misdemeanor go into a diversion program rather than be arrested. However, from June of 2022 through May of this year, the Tallahassee Police Department only issued civil citations to 26% of eligible children. The Sheriff's office issued civil citations to 72% of eligible children from June of 2022 through May of this year. Children who make childish mistakes should not be arrested. Being thrust into the criminal justice system greatly increases the likelihood that youth will engage in criminal behavior and gun violence. And an arrest record can block them from college, jobs, and entry into the military.

- At our Nehemiah Action in March, with the power of 700 people, the Sheriff committed to ensure that 100% of children who are eligible receive a second chance through a civil citation. The chief of police did not attend our Action and will not meet with us.
- CAJM met several times with TPD and LCSO leadership and once with Jack Campbell, State Attorney to discuss ways to increase the issuance of civil citations. The State Attorney revised the MOU with law enforcement in our region to increase eligibility for civil citations. For example/youth can now receive more than one civil citation and are not automatically disqualified because of a domestic violence charge.
- We have received quality data from TPD and LCSO on civil citations and have two remaining questions. 1) What percentage of eligible youth received a civil citation? This is the percentage we are most interested in. 2) Which schools have a policy restricting the use of civil citations?
- After our questions are answered, we will likely move to monitoring data every six months, intervening if there are questions or a downward trend in the percentage of civil citations given.