

July 1, 2021

The Honorable Tom Barrett  
City Hall  
200 E Wells St, Room 201  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Mayor Barrett,

We write to you today in regards to relief funds that the City of Milwaukee has secured from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) legislation. We were pleased to hear your recent comments reiterating your support for raising violence prevention as a priority area for investment of these federal funds. We greatly appreciate the ongoing work of the City of Milwaukee on this very important topic through the Office of Violence Prevention, among other initiatives.

Violence is a public health epidemic impacting families in Milwaukee, across our state and especially victimizing families of color. According to the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission, through May 2021, there have been 65 homicide victims and 319 nonfatal shooting victims. This compares to 61 homicide victims and 169 nonfatal shooting victims through May 2020. This represents an 89% increase in nonfatal shooting victims in Milwaukee in the first five months of 2021 compared to the first five months of 2020. The rise in child and family violence in our communities, exacerbated by the conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic, is alarming to our health systems and our community at large.

As you know, gun violence is a multi-faceted problem and requires a comprehensive approach. This includes prevention-focused efforts, violence interruption programs and other services to reach our most vulnerable families. The federal ARPA funds represent a significant opportunity for the city to meaningfully invest in community partners across Milwaukee working tirelessly to prevent, interrupt and reduce violence and its impact on our children, teens, families and community. **We support the Office of Violence Prevention's request for ARPA dollars to advance the City's comprehensive approach to violence prevention.** Additionally, the health system members of the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership have also prioritized violence prevention as a key community health improvement issue and are working collaboratively with stakeholders to advance four health care-related violence intervention efforts, including the expansion of 414Life, Project Ujima, data collection and reporting.

The most recent announcement from the White House related to gun violence prevention included the convening of a Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Collaborative. The CVI Collaborative represents 15 jurisdictions across the country, along with philanthropic partners, who are committed to investing ARPA funds to support community violence intervention programming in their localities. The CVI Collaborative will support both proven and new strategies that reduce gun violence and strengthen community-based infrastructure to enhance public safety for children, families, and communities and to advance equity. **We write to you today to ask for your continued support for violence prevention efforts and to heed the President's call to mayors across the country to make the commitment to use ARPA and other public funds to strengthen CVI programming in Milwaukee.**

We recognize that there are many well-deserving programs in need of funding and resources to ensure they are able to provide valuable services to our Milwaukee neighbors. We appreciate your focus on these issues to date and respectfully ask for your support on the above as our city faces an unprecedented opportunity for bold leadership and investment. We encourage your commitment to

address this public health epidemic comprehensively and meaningfully on behalf of all Milwaukee kids, adults and families.

Thank you for your consideration of this investment opportunity and we look forward to our continued partnerships.

Sincerely,

Ascension Wisconsin  
Children's Wisconsin  
Children's Wisconsin – Project Ujima  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
Medical College of Wisconsin – Comprehensive Injury Center

*cc: Members of the City of Milwaukee Common Council*