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JULY 2017

BALTIMORE CITY  
PROPOSED STRATEGY FOR  
PERSONAL & COMMUNITY  
SAFETY (“BALTIMORE PROSPERS”)



# OVERVIEW

We are glad that the Governor and Mayor met last week to discuss the violence that is plaguing our City right now. We hope that discussions lead to quick and purposeful action and leadership. The current state of affairs is totally unacceptable, and we have grown increasingly frustrated about the lack of an urgent response and a well-thought out plan for decreasing violence in our City. We therefore have spent significant time over the last several months meeting with the lead actors in our City's fight against crime, and we are familiar with the programs available through the Governor's office and Mayor's office.

There is not one single entity at the state or local level who is directly responsible for addressing crime and violence, and this decentralized responsibility leads to some of the mess we now find ourselves facing - there is not one person accountable for the problem. The responsibility must be shared by many - from the Mayor and Governor's offices to Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), Governor's Office on Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP), Maryland's Office of Parole and Probation, the Department of Human Resources, the State's Attorney's office, Baltimore Police Department, and many more. And, more importantly, effectively handling the crisis in our midst will require consistent and ongoing collaboration between each of these entities.

Generations of disinvestment in certain communities has consequences. Violence, saturation with illegal guns, and hopelessness are the wages of disinvestment and cannot be fixed overnight by a single piece of legislation.

The effects of a failed "War on Drugs" and criminalizing substance abuse are still being felt and, [according to a paper published by nonprofit Child Trends](#), children of incarcerated parents often develop health problems, miss school and, eventually, break the law. And yet, simply giving up is not an option. **There are in fact many policy options that exist and can be solutions for our City to invest in our residents and neighbors and stop this violence while also creating stronger and healthier communities in the long-term.** Many other states and cities have already made these investments, and as a result they are not seeing the skyrocketing homicide rate that Baltimore is experiencing.

Below, we offer a framework for moving forward. **This is not the beginning of the conversation, and it's certainly not the end: these are our thoughts after talking with many individuals engaged every day in this work - and we look forward to hearing your thoughts as well.** We propose these ideas for the purpose of starting a discussion that government, civic, and business leaders must have now so that we can address violence and crime head-on. First, we lay out the steps we must take starting **today**. Second, we outline upcoming legislation we will propose during the 2018 legislative session. Next, we discuss some of the work that we have done over the past few years that will have long-term effects at creating positive change in Baltimore and Maryland to reduce crime; this is not a new problem, and we've made efforts to mitigate what we could in years past. Finally we call for a need for urgency in action on the part of all of this plan's participants.

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## PART I IMMEDIATE ACTION STEPS

### A. Investigative & Enforcement Work

**We believe these steps must be taken in the very near term in order to lay the foundations for the longer-term work.**

**The Mayor must appoint someone to head the Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) immediately - this position is too important to have gone unfilled for this long.** This person must act as the point-person for all City-State-Federal coordination on violence and gun prevention efforts. Likewise, the Governor should appoint a high-level official in the Administration to act as the point-person on crime and violence prevention efforts so that there is one person who can keep track of and work on all aspects of violence prevention at the state level. We also encourage our federal representatives to work with the President to appoint a U.S. Attorney who can work with our state and local leaders.

**Top-notch coordination from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice is essential.** MOCJ is the nerve center of an effective crime fight. Mayor Pugh must leverage available resources and immediately hire a first-rate expert with a proven record of positive outcomes. As important as the quality of the individual appointed is the authority granted to cut through the bureaucratic red tape to implement strategies immediately. Without the Mayor's full confidence, this director cannot

succeed. Finally, with an empowered MOCJ, the City must immediately reconvene the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

**GunStat: The new Director of MOCJ must reinstate the GunStat program to hold all parties accountable for the over-availability of illegal weapons and to track felonies that are committed with guns.** Philadelphia has a model program that we could replicate and in the past, Baltimore has had success with employing a GunStat program.

**The State Police along with other state-level law enforcement agencies should work with BPD to relieve BPD of enforcement at DJS facilities and along major roadways in Baltimore City.** Where shared jurisdiction exists, state-level law enforcement personnel should be leveraged to allow BPD officers to focus attention on the City's most violent offenders. As the BPD faces an overall staffing shortage and scheduling constraints, we must ensure that our BPD officers are focused on a coordinated strategy aimed at violent repeat offenders. Support from other law enforcement agencies in the State will be essential as a short-term measure to accomplish this objective.

# PART I IMMEDIATE ACTION STEPS.

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## B. Violence Prevention Initiatives

**GOCCP should fund the expansion of Safe Streets programs in Baltimore, run by the Health Department.** Further, this evidence-based program should be expanded where possible in the City's Transformation Zones to highlight a clear and apparent focus on violence reduction.

**The City should lead an effort to expand and sustainably fund the YouthWorks job program for young adults.** While this program has excellent results for summer, we must work with all stakeholders to offer a more robust, year-long offering for Baltimore's youth. YouthWorks expands economic opportunities and gives young people relevant experience for careers. We must offer more sustainable and productive options for the young people of Baltimore.

**Until last year, Baltimore City's Health Department oversaw an interagency initiative called Operation Safe Kids (OSK).** This program worked across city-level agencies to coordinate interventions for some of our City's most challenged youth. Working since 2003, OSK served as an effective strategy for reducing violent behavior. Unfortunately, state funding for the program was eliminated one year ago, and the DJS has not launched a replicated program as intended. This is unacceptable and must be addressed with urgency.

**We need immediate, coordinated enforcement of current gun laws.** This includes a review of the efficacy of those policies, and analysis of major cities that have had success in impacting gun violence. We must effectively prosecute repeat gun offenders, and judges must hold offenders accountable at sentencing. Finally, we must better leverage prosecutorial assistance from Maryland's U.S. Attorney's office. Baltimore utilized this partnership with the U.S. Attorney effectively in prior years, shifting our most violent gun offenders to federal jurisdiction. There must be a renewed urgency for strengthening this partnership.

**The City should investigate the utility of utilizing licensing (liquor licenses and after-hour licenses) to require commercial establishments to install certain camera systems that feed into a citiwatch-like database for use upon commission of crime in close proximity.** These incentives could include one or more of the following: purchase and installation costs that are subsidized or waived for women and minority business owners, or business owners in high-crime areas, ongoing annual tax credits, or a one time tax refund.



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## C. Juvenile Crime Initiatives

**We must engage in a comprehensive review of our juvenile justice system.** Governor Hogan's leadership on this issue is essential, we cannot afford apathy. What we have isn't working. The system is failing to offer the structure, support, and incentives young people need. We have the data to make decisions about youth at highest risk, but the use of this data requires synchronicity. The barriers between government and providers must go; instead, we must create a real system of juvenile development. DJS officials, the State's Attorney's office, the Office of the Public Defender, BPD, the Health Department, City Schools, and MOCJ (The Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice) should create a task force on juvenile violence to target intervention

strategies, review caseloads and individual cases, and attempt novel initiatives like late high school start times and dismissal times to identify what strategies keep students in school and off the streets.

**The Mayor and Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, should work together to identify the most at-risk students, and then engage in an all-hands-on-deck approach to provide the resources and attention they need to stay out of trouble and stay alive.** These partnerships will provide necessary additional resources and programming to help reach students at risk for dropping out or falling behind.

Authority: Friends of Team 46 Slate, Chris Madaio, Treasurer



## D. Returning Citizens

DPSCS should reinstate programs like the Public Safety Compact that provide wraparound support and training to strive for zero recidivism and successful re-entry for individuals leaving incarceration.

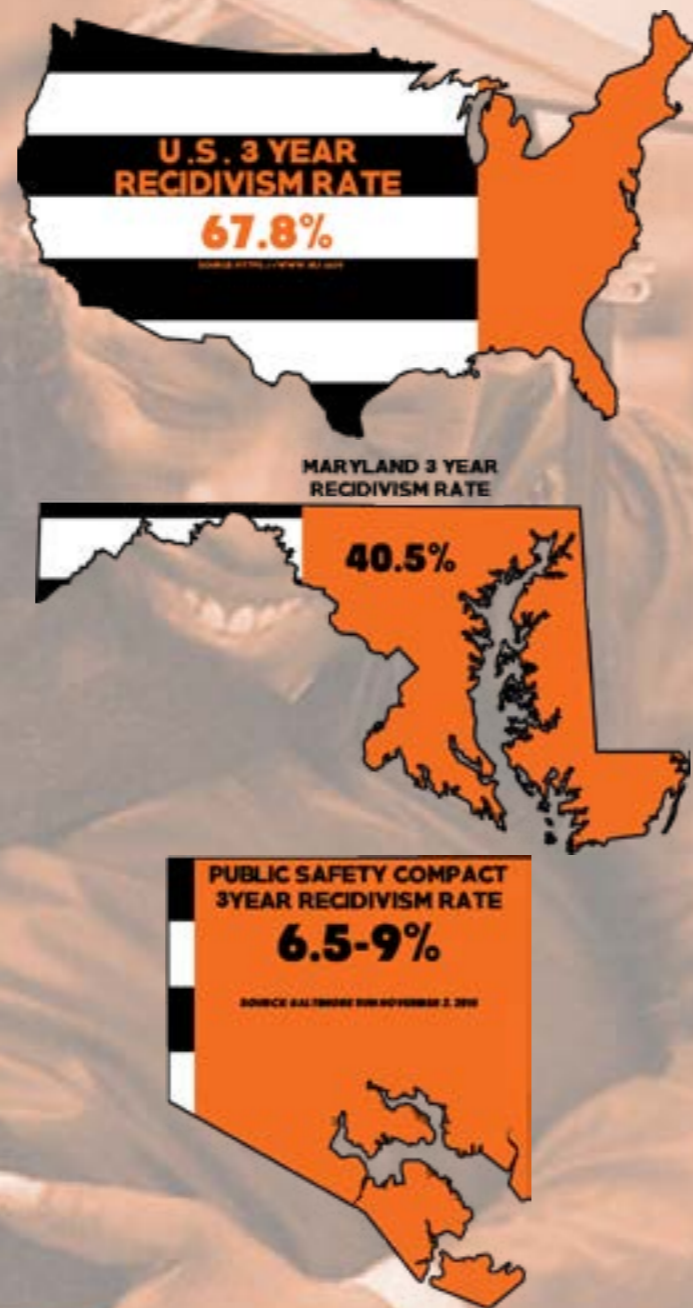
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**HERE'S HOW THE [PUBLIC SAFETY] COMPACT WORKS. WHEN POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE BALTIMORE INMATES ARRIVE IN PRISON, THEY ARE SCREENED TO DETERMINE THEIR SUITABILITY FOR THE COMPACT. WHILE BEHIND BARS, THEY TYPICALLY RECEIVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT, AND IF THE PAROLE COMMISSION AGREES TO RELEASE THEM EARLY, THEY ARE ASSIGNED CASE MANAGERS WHO WORK WITH THEM ON HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH INSURANCE AND OTHER THINGS THEY WILL NEED UPON RELEASE.**

**WHEN THEY'RE OUT, THEY GET INTENSIVE SERVICES AND, WHERE NECESSARY, CASH ASSISTANCE FOR THINGS LIKE TRANSPORTATION TO JOBS."**

SOURCE: BREAKING THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMPACT BALTIMORE SUN, NOVEMBER 2, 2015



## PART II PROPOSED 2018 LEGISLATION



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### A. Fund Evidence-Based Violence Prevention Programs

The crime and violence in Baltimore did not start overnight and will not end overnight. We must begin properly funding proven and effective strategies - of which there are many - to prevent violence now and create a healthier city in the long term. This funding will help prevent violence of all kinds - homicide, suicide, gun violence, domestic violence, and other forms of violence.

Many other cities and states with large cities have significantly less crime and gun violence - because they have invested in long-term proven strategies largely rooted in public health philosophies. Baltimore and Maryland have failed to properly invest, and we must change that as soon as possible. In Boston, D.C., San Francisco, cities in Ohio, and elsewhere, strategies have been deployed that have resulted in decreased violence and death. Safe Streets Baltimore has a proven track record of reducing violence in the neighborhoods in which it is operated. Unfortunately, it is only operating in up to 5 neighborhoods right now. Its budget should be increased exponentially so that the Health Department can properly expand this program to 14-15 neighborhoods to create a gestalt effect around the City. This program should especially

focus on the City's Transformation Zones to highlight a clear focus on violence reduction.

These strategies are grounded in public health practices and include working with health departments and hospitals, working with survivors of violence, funding programs like Safe Streets, and other Cure Violence-based sites, and awarding and ensuring proper coordination among all parties.

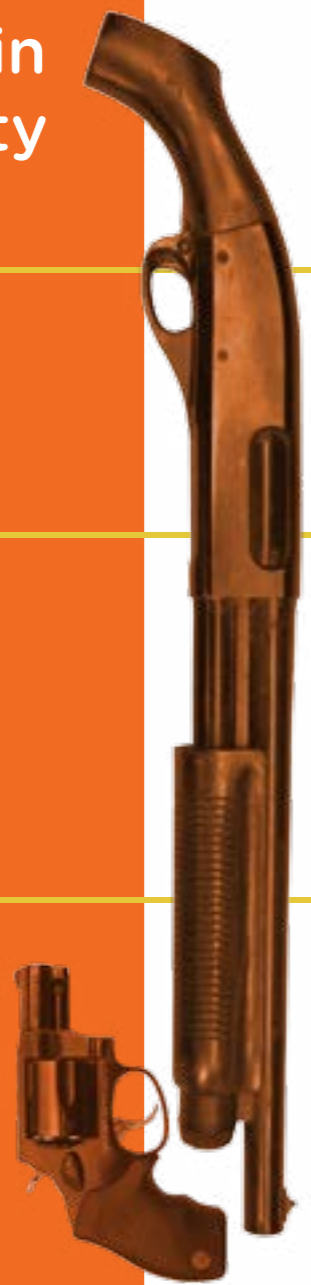
We propose creating and funding a Violence Prevention Fund based in State Department of Health that will work with local health departments around the state to fund evidence-based programs aimed at curbing all types of violence. The grants from this program must be strategically targeted at our State's highest risk communities where violence is most severe, and the providers must be continuously monitored for progress towards identified goals. We don't just need new funding, we need purposeful, targeted funding of programs that prove to be effective and treat the problem of violence like the public health emergency that it is.

# Illegal Gun Prosecution in Baltimore City

25%

15%

16 months



The Baltimore Sun analyzed 100 illegal-gun cases in which defendants were arrested between November and March to get a sample of cases that have mostly been adjudicated.

About 25% of illegal gun cases are dropped, annually.

Baltimore Prosecutors say people convicted of carrying an illegal gun have received 15% of the total possible time that could be sentenced.

“Even when convicted of illegally possessing a firearm, prosecutors say, defendants are sentenced on average to 16 months in jail, with a substantial portion of their sentences suspended.”

SOURCE: ARRESTS IN BALTIMORE FOR ILLEGAL GUNS OFTEN LEAD TO DROPPED CHARGES OR LITTLE JAIL TIME. BALTIMORE SUN

## B. Taking Steps To Eliminate Illegal Guns

Maryland is awash in illegal guns. In 2013, Maryland passed comprehensive gun safety legislation – but without stricter penalties for illegally possessing a gun, those measures are not as effective as they should be.

For the last two years, we’ve introduced and supported versions of legislation that would strengthen penalties for possession of an illegal firearm statewide. Legislators from other parts of the State pushed back, arguing that people could accidentally be in possession of an illegal firearm – and that error could result in a mandatory minimum under previous bills.

The bill has evolved since its first introduction and in its latest iteration would ensure that individuals who are convicted of wearing or carrying an illegal firearm for the **second time** would receive at least one year in prison. Currently, many of these individuals are being released with suspended sentences and serving little to no jail time for being caught multiple times with a firearm they illegally possess.

Mandatory minimums alone will not lower illegal gun use and we believe that mandatory minimums for non-violent offenses, like possession of drugs and drug-related crimes were and are counterproductive and led to mass incarceration that must end and never be repeated. We enthusiastically supported the [Justice Reinvestment Act of 2016](#) to start the necessary end to this over-incarceration.

However, we also believe that the illegal possession of guns – and particularly the illegal possession of **loaded** guns – must be treated differently. There is no treatment program available

for unlawfully possessing a loaded firearm, and there must be stronger consequences to deter individuals from deciding to carry one.

**Mandatory minimums alone will not lower illegal gun use and we believe that mandatory minimums for non-violent offenses, like possession of drugs and drug-related crimes were and are counterproductive and led to mass incarceration that must end and never be repeated.**

We are looking at the laws that other states use when people illegally possess a firearm to find ways to strengthen our laws and deter people from seeking guns without getting a permit from the State Police.

Other gun bills we will consider offering this Session include:

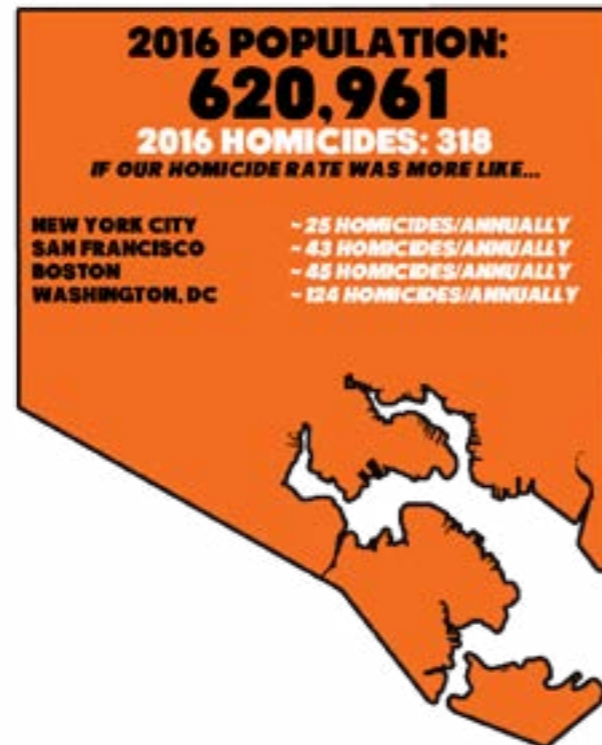
- Ensuring that firearms sellers can no longer escape prosecution for an unlawful sale by claiming to have simply loaned an offender a gun rather than selling it.
- Creating a statewide database of individuals who are prohibited from possessing firearms, thereby allowing for more effective interagency information sharing among law enforcement agencies and mental health providers.
- Continue supporting [legislation like SB 727](#) that would require courts to enforce the prohibition against convicted domestic abusers that they surrender their guns and providing a process for them to do so.



The table below shows the homicide numbers and rates for coastal cities in the U.S.A. that have made significant investments in Violence & Crime Prevention Initiatives

City or Region	2016 Population	2016 Homicides	2016 Homicides per Capita	2016 Violence & Crime Prevention Dollars Invested
BALTIMORE	620,961	318	51.22	APPROX. \$1.7M
NEW YORK CITY	8,400,000	344	4.09	\$16M
SAN FRANCISCO	852,000	59	6.92	\$15M
D.C.	672,000	134	19.94	\$20M
BOSTON	655,000	47	7.18	\$4.65M

Working with the Boston Police Department to identify and provide services for the 300 young men identified as being at high risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence. This initiative- Partners Advancing Communities Together (PACT) - is a multidisciplinary, comprehensive service delivery strategy targeted at high-risk youth, where partners work together to connect youth to long-term, meaningful relationships with trusted adults and to education and employment services. A 2014 evaluation found that "a dollar invested in Boston's PACT program could be expected to gain a savings of nearly \$7.40 in crime-related cost savings." - [SOURCE: bigcitieshealth.org](http://bigcitieshealth.org)



**C. Ensure that Juveniles Who Commit Dangerous Offenses are Given the Services they Need by the Department of Juvenile Services**

We will work with DJS, OPD, the SA's office and other advocates to ensure that juveniles who are truly dangerous are not on the streets and are given the services that they need to help them re-enter society safely in the future. This summer we are doing a walkthrough of the City's intake center for juveniles to better understand and appreciate the scope of the challenge at all parts of the process. While we've had a number of productive conversations with officials and practitioners, we are also taking the time necessary to see the challenges of the system personally.

work with advocates to pass a bill that allows for a "blended" sentence for juveniles found responsible for serious violent crimes. A blended sentence is a sentence imposed in a juvenile court that blends a juvenile sentence and an adult sentence. The idea behind a blended sentence is this - there are some cases in the juvenile system that are serious: a 13-year-old charged with first degree murder, or a 16 or 17 year old who is found delinquent of a subsequent armed robbery. A blended sentence would allow a juvenile court to place these juveniles into programs targeted at juveniles first, but provide for an adult sentence if they don't do what they're required to do in the juvenile system.

Ultimately, we plan to propose legislation to enable DJS and State Department of Health and Governor's Office of Children to administer a Pay for Success funding model for juvenile diversion, based on Massachusetts' Juvenile Justice Pay for Success Initiative, currently being carried out by the [Roca program](#). While we have somewhat similar programs operating now in Baltimore like the [University of Baltimore's Truancy Court](#), we need a more coordinated, purposeful strategy for changing the trajectory of our City's young people who are most in need.

Right now, if a juvenile is found to be delinquent for any crime and is adjudicated in the juvenile system, the most serious penalty the juvenile can receive is to be detained until the child reaches the age of 21. There is no further probation after they turn 21, even though young adults may benefit from continued services. We want to ensure that juveniles do not unnecessarily end up in the adult system and also ensure that very dangerous juveniles are provided the services they need to help them re-enter society in a safe matter, even if that time is after the age of 21.

Additionally, the Governor and DJS should

## PART III PIECES IN MOTION



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### A. Ongoing Work

Many of these problems are ones we, along with leaders from the Baltimore City Delegation identified some time ago. These are some of the steps we've already taken to work on much of the long-term problem solving, and how we've focused on systemic problems leading to extreme poverty, joblessness, and criminal activity.

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### Continue Advocating for Economic, Social, and Criminal Justice Measures that Improve the Lives of All Marylanders

Creating safe communities is a fundamental driver of why each of us chose to run for office. Safe communities are communities where families can thrive, jobs are accessible and pay to support the cost of living, and where schools offer high-quality education. In other words, there is no separating the long-term problems that exist in Baltimore City from our crime and violence problems.

Over the last several sessions, we have consistently sought strategies and policies that would expand opportunity and reduce incentives for violence in Baltimore. These strategies have predominantly been focused on longer-term initiatives, but over the last two years since the unrest in Baltimore, we have purposely advanced and supported reforms targeting our criminal justice system, neighborhoods, and economic development across the City. Below we highlight illustrative legislation and policy initiatives that we have championed over the years to work towards longer-term solutions in Baltimore.



## COMBATTING CRIME

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### Baltimore Police Department Consent Decree Implementation:

- The [FY18 State Budget](#) includes language requiring the State to monitor the implementation of the Justice Department's Consent Decree in Baltimore City. We strongly supported this enhanced oversight role, and will continue to use the leverage we have at the State level to ensure that our police department is fully valuing the rights of all people in our City as we work together to create a genuine sense of safety in all neighborhoods.
- During this past legislative session, we secured a \$2m line item appropriation for BPD to implement the consent decree during FY2018 - [Supplemental Budget #1 of 2017](#). This funding can be put immediately to use for the purchase of squad car technology and the expansion of the City's CitiWatch network cameras along key City corridors.

### Substance Abuse Treatment:

- We have passed several measures to deal with the opioid crisis, including the [HOPE Act](#) (SB 987). While the HOPE Act offers an excellent foundation for treating substance abuse as a public health crisis first and foremost, we will continue to have to monitor implementation of this initiative to ensure success. The Opioid Crisis in Maryland is not new to Baltimore, but we are hopeful that renewed attention on this disease will bring the resources necessary to tackle this complex problem in our City.
- The Governor recently announced start-up funding for a [new Stabilization Center](#). This project came out of the work of the Fell's Point Task Force in 2013, and we are glad to see it moving forward four years later. However, this is just one small step in a much more complicated treatment landscape.
- 2017's Supplemental Budget No. 2 provides \$275,000 in general funds to implement recommendations from the Governor's Heroin and Opioid Emergency Task Force that pertain to the Department of Public Safety; approximately \$200,000 will be used to establish a multi-jurisdictional Heroin Investigation Unit, which - if the Governor agreed to it - could be used to focus for the next 6 to 12 months on Baltimore homicides suspected of emanating from heroin distribution.

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## ECONOMIC JUSTICE

### Increase in the Minimum Wage:

One of the core drivers of crime is lack of economic stability. Solving this problem is an ongoing body of work, but in 2013, Delegate Luke Clippinger and Senator Bill Ferguson [proudly voted to increase the state's minimum wage](#) (NOTE: neither Brooke Lierman nor Robbyn Lewis were yet members of the House of Delegates). As a result of the passage of this legislation, Maryland will be one of the few states in the nation to set the minimum wage at \$10.10 per hour on July 1, 2018.

### Providing the Opportunity to Earn Sick Leave:

Many lower-income Marylanders work multiple part-time jobs that do not provide the opportunity to take time off when they or a family member is ill. Choosing between work and illness further exacerbates economic instability in lower-income families. During the 2017 session, all four members of the 46th District Delegation voted for the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act of 2017 sponsored by Delegate Clippinger. The Governor vetoed that legislation in May, and the legislature will seek to override that veto when the legislature returns in January of 2018.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

## The Justice Reinvestment Act:

This comprehensive criminal justice reform bill passed in 2016 with the support and involvement of Team 46. This bill will dramatically reshape how multiple justice and law enforcement agencies handle crime and incarceration in our state by shifting our state's focus from incarcerating people who are addicts and need healthcare treatment and counseling to targeting violent criminals for jail time. The bill will begin to be implemented this fall and overseen by a Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council that brings representatives from all branches of government, multiple agencies, and advocates together. This bill will end many drug-related mandatory minimums and help end over-incarceration of Marylanders for drug addiction and technical parole or probation violations, and instead focus on jailing violent criminals and decreasing recidivism. By reducing the Maryland prison population by over 1,100 over the next decade (as opposed to growing it as we have been doing for the past 20 years), the state should save an estimated \$80 million that can be redirected to violence prevention programs. The bill also enhances law enforcement's ability to combat violent crime by making enhancements to the criminal gang statute.



## PART III PIECES IN MOTION (CONTINUED)

### B. Passed Legislation

The problem of violence in Baltimore is not a new one, and is one we have sought to find equitable resolutions to for quite some time. These are the policies we've passed during prior sessions with Baltimore's systemic inequities in mind.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENTS IN BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS

## 2016 BALTIMORE PACKAGE

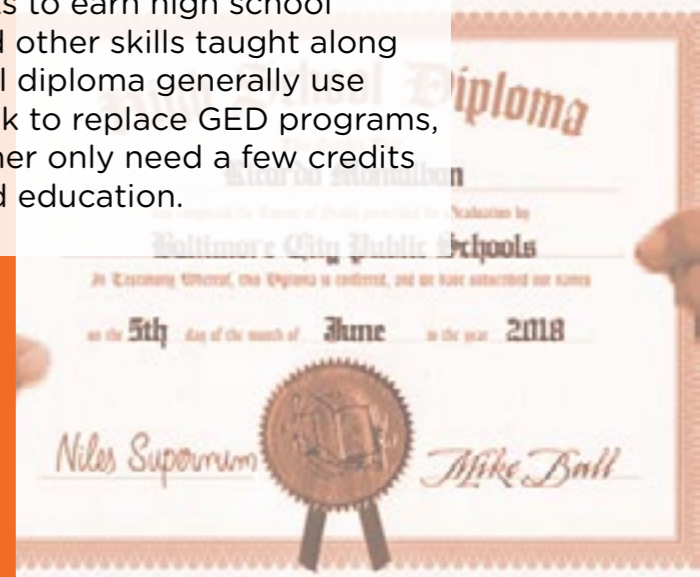
During the 2016 Session, we worked with the Baltimore City Delegation to pass a package of bills dedicating \$250 million towards Baltimore communities over a 5 year period.

Unfortunately, the Governor had initially zeroed out funding for this year and then only restored 50% of the first year funds. Through the budget process, we have been able to restore the vast majority of funding. We will continue to fight for these important investments in our City's children, economic potential, and community redevelopment.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENTS IN BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS

Delegate Clippinger sponsored and we all supported legislation to create "Adult High Schools." Adult High Schools will add a new pathway to the 450,000 Marylanders between 18 and 65 who don't have a high school diploma. These new schools will allow for adults to earn high school credits towards a diploma, with job training and other skills taught along the way. Presently, adults seeking a high school diploma generally use GED programs. Adult High Schools will not seek to replace GED programs, but provide an alternative for students who either only need a few credits for their diploma, or may need more specialized education.

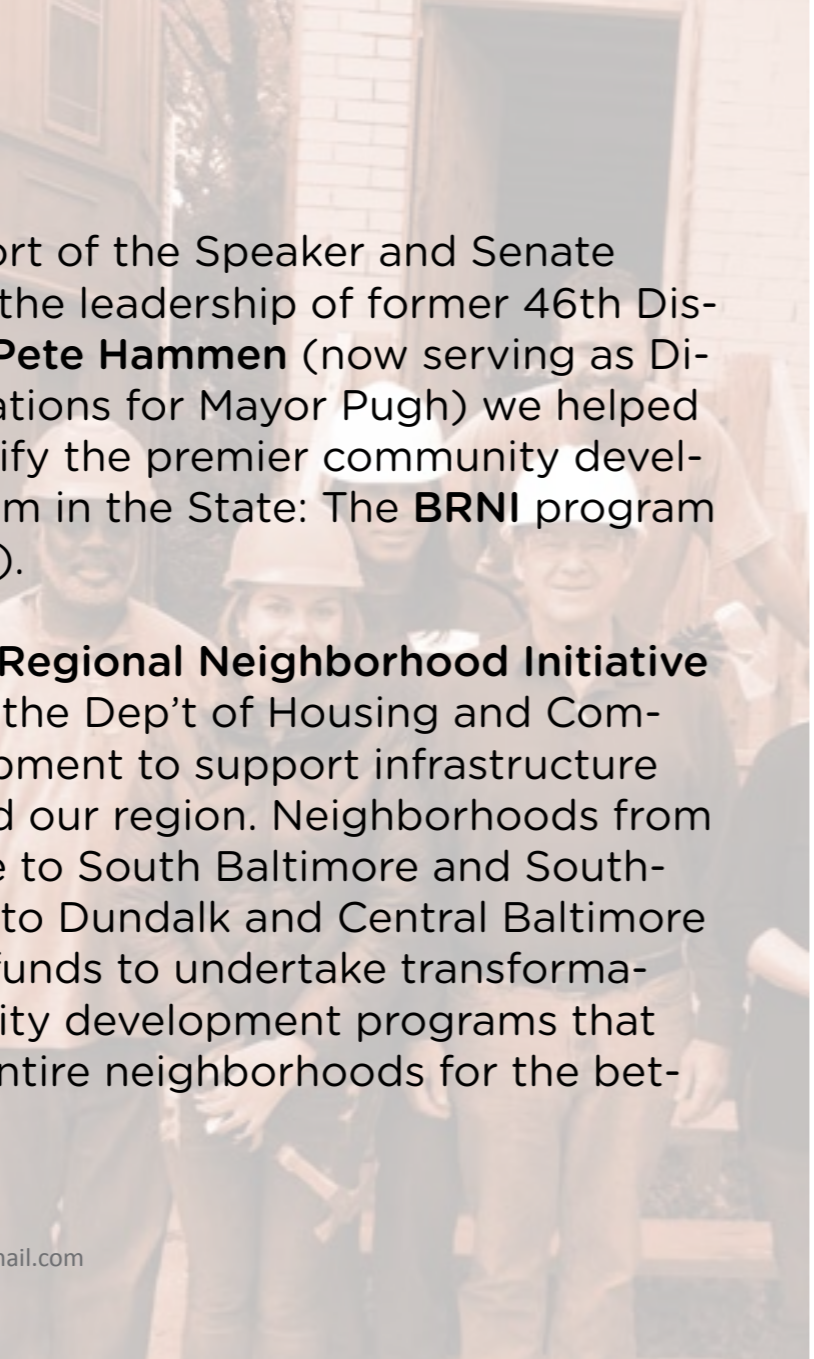




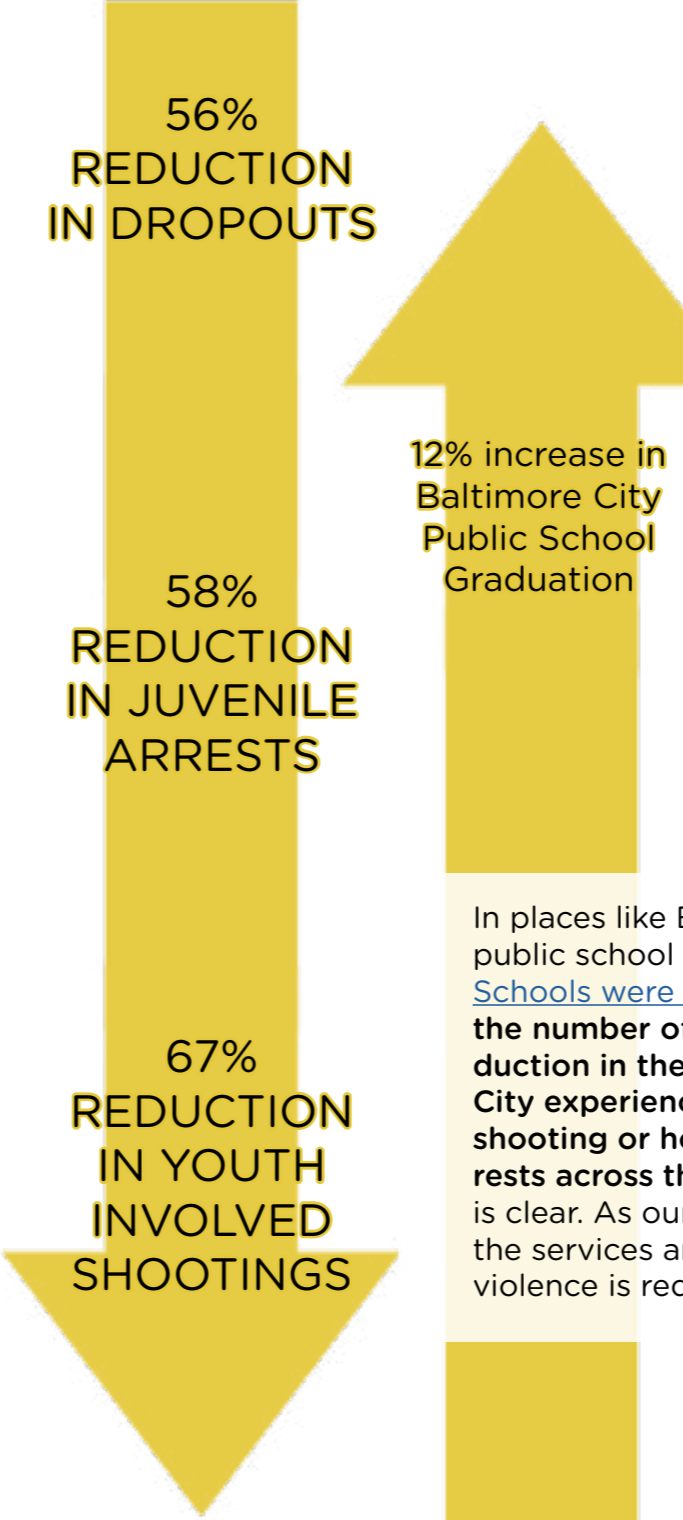
# PART III PIECES IN MOTION

With the support of the Speaker and Senate President, and the leadership of former 46th District **Delegate Pete Hammen** (now serving as Director of Operations for Mayor Pugh) we helped create and codify the premier community development program in the State: The **BRNI** program ([JCR, page 261](#)).

**The Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative** works through the Dep't of Housing and Community Development to support infrastructure projects around our region. Neighborhoods from West Baltimore to South Baltimore and Southeast Baltimore to Dundalk and Central Baltimore have received funds to undertake transformational community development programs that are changing entire neighborhoods for the better.



# PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY



In places like Baltimore City, there is an obvious relationship between public school effectiveness and youth violence. [As Baltimore City Public Schools were improving from 2007 through 2011](#), we saw a **12% increase in the number of high school graduates in our public schools** and a **56% reduction in the number of dropouts**. Over that same time period, **Baltimore City experienced a 67% reduction in the number of youths involved in a shooting or homicide and a 58% reduction in the number of juvenile arrests across the City**. The link between school success and juvenile safety is clear. As our schools more effectively reach our City's young people with the services and settings they need, kids are more successful and juvenile violence is reduced.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY

We passed legislation to create P-TECH High Schools in Baltimore City to add high-quality technical training to the high school curriculum in Baltimore. Currently, Baltimore City Public Schools offers 2 P-TECH programs, and we are looking for additional opportunities to expand.

[2012 Taskforce on School Dropouts and Their Impact on the Criminal Justice System](#) - Senator Ferguson and Mayor Pugh, then serving as senator for the 40th Legislative District, served on a statewide taskforce outlining potential actions the State and local jurisdictions could take to reduce incidences of juvenile crime. The 2012 report's recommendations still hold true today. Importantly, the report highlights that the cost to Maryland for detaining one juvenile is \$172,757 per year, roughly 10x the cost we allocate per student in the Baltimore City Public Schools. The need for preventative and proactive approaches to this problem are obvious.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY

One way to ensure that students graduate is to **keep them in school.**

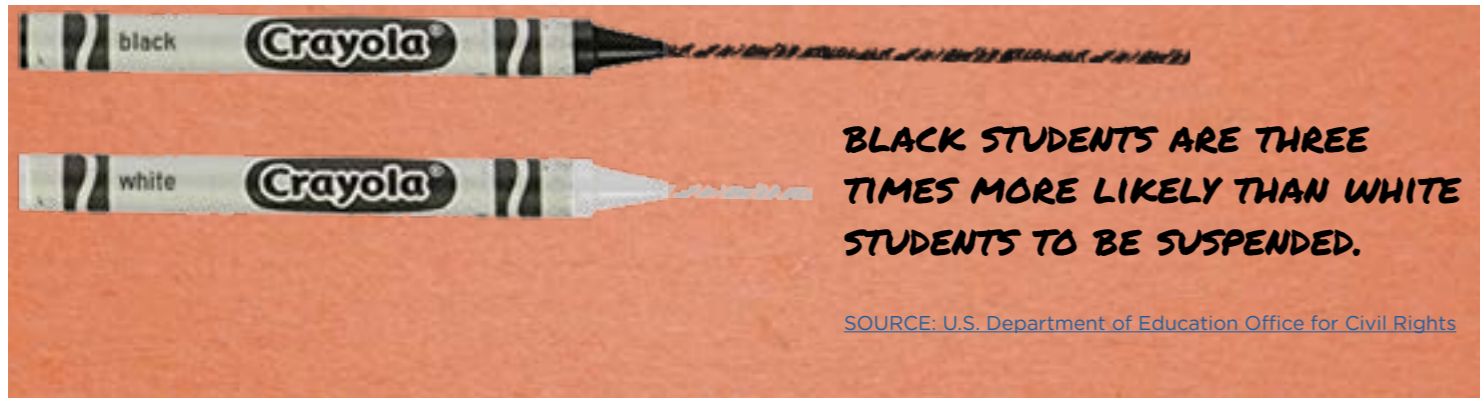
Studies indicate that young children who are expelled or suspended are significantly less likely to graduate from High School. Brooke Lierman introduced and passed (and Delegates Clippinger and Lewis, and Senator Ferguson supported) legislation to **prohibit out-of-school suspension and expulsion of PreK-second graders** (HB 425). Long-term, this will have a positive impact on our school system and students.



# STUDENT RACIAL DISPARITY IN CASES OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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- Across age groups, black students are three times more likely than white students to be suspended.
- While boys make up the large majority of students who are suspended (about eight in 10), about 12 percent of black girls are suspended and 7 percent of Native American girls are suspended. That's a rate higher than that of white boys (6 percent).
- Black students make up about 16 percent of enrolled students, but make up more than a quarter of all students who are referred to the police.
- Native Americans are also overrepresented among the suspended. They make up one percent of enrolled students but two percent of the suspended.
- Students with disabilities make up about 12 percent of the student population, but they make up 75 percent of those restrained at schools. There's a racial gap there, too: blacks are about 19 percent of the population with a disability, but make up more than a third of students who "are restrained at school through the use of a mechanical device or equipment designed to restrict their freedom of movement.
- English-language learners were underrepresented among the suspended.



# MARYLAND E Q U A L A C C E S S T O F O O D A C T O F 2017

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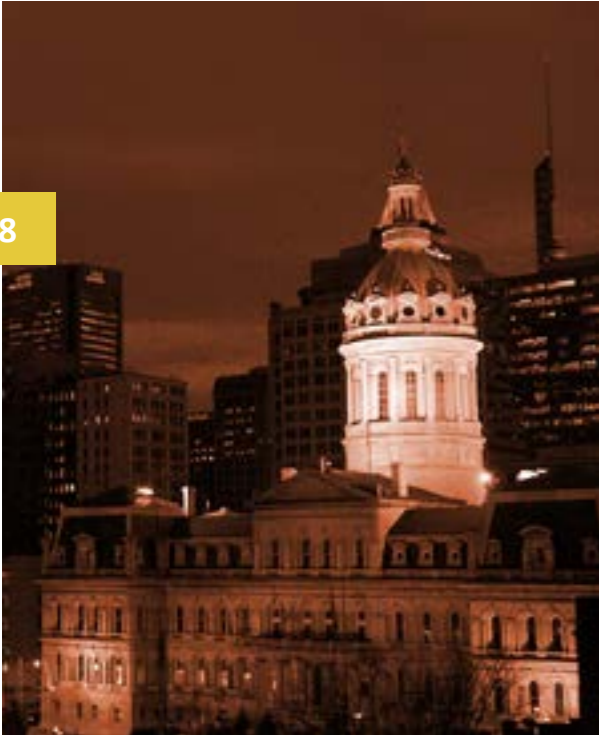
[The Maryland Equal Access to Food Act \(H.B. 860\)](#) repeals a restriction on SNAP/TCA Benefits for individuals struggling to reintegrate who have prior drug convictions

Maryland law imposes arbitrarily restrictive eligibility for federal benefit programs to ex-offenders with a prior drug charge (a vestige of the ineffective War on Drugs).

In addition to struggling with addiction, these individuals may face obstacles in finding steady work -- exactly the people SNAP and TCA benefits are designed to help. HB860 seeks to reduce recidivism by removing this restriction and helping people to get back on their feet. This bill became law on July 1, 2017



## PART IV CONCLUSION



The gravity of the violence in Baltimore today requires the Governor and Mayor to act immediately. Every day we delay momentum around a clear strategy with measurable goals is a day wasted in working to save our young people and our neighborhoods from the scourge of drug addiction and violence we are facing as a City and State.

We are readying our bills. We will be meeting with legislators from around the State to work together to do what we can from the General Assembly to stop the violence and invest in our City's residents. We hope that when we introduce these bills next January, the Mayor and Governor will have already taken action to stem the tide of violence in our City.

To comprehensively address this crisis, each of these recommendations requires leaders in the Baltimore region to consistently meet, plan, and implement an identified game plan. We need ongoing programming, innovation, and experimentation to create opportunity, reduce violence, and restore the level of trust in relationships between our communities and law enforcement. This collaborative and data-driven work should include participation of electeds, emergency responders, police (leadership and patrol officers), teachers, counselors, juvenile justice workers, judges, community leaders, and state/federal partners.

Finally, our approach must recognize that we only resolve this crisis sustainably when we create real opportunities for Baltimoreans: jobs, training, education, reliable transit, addiction counseling/ treatment, and affordable housing. We cannot ignore the deeper, structural problems that lead to crime — lack of economic opportunity, lack of education, addiction, structural racism, youth unemployment, segregated housing — each of which contributes to the broader landscape that causes crime spikes. Unfortunately, though, when crime reaches levels we are experiencing today, tackling these larger challenges becomes nearly impossible. We must triage the emergency, establish a path to a violence-free future, and work every day and every session toward reaching that vision of a safer, more equitable Baltimore.

**For Baltimore, and for Maryland,**

Senator Bill Ferguson

Delegate Luke Clippinger

Delegate Brooke Lierman

Delegate Robbyn Lewis



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