
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Aisha Wahab, Chair

2023 - 2024 Regular

Bill No: AB 2064 **Hearing Date:** July 2, 2024
Author: Jones-Sawyer
Version: June 11, 2024
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: JD

Subject: *Community Violence Interdiction Grant Program*

HISTORY

Source: Author

Prior Legislation: AB 1454 (Jones-Sawyer), Chapter 584, Statutes of 2019.
AB 1603 (Jones-Sawyer) Chapter 735, Statutes of 2019.
SB 493 (Bradford), held in Assembly Appropriations, 2021.
AB 762 (Wicks), Chapter 421, Statutes of 2023.

Support: Alameda County Office of Education; Alliance for Reparations, Reconciliation, and Truth; Black Equity Collective; California Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; California Black Power Network; California Public Defenders Association; California Reparations Task Force Members Dr. Cheryl Grills, Lisa Holder, and Don Tamaki; Catalyst California; County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors; Equal Justice Society; Greater Sacramento Urban League; Livefree California; Multi-faith Action Coalition

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: 64 - 7

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to require the California Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) to establish and administer the Community Violence Interdiction Grant Program (CVIGP) to provide funding to local community programs for community-driven solutions to decrease violence in neighborhoods and schools. The bill requires the funding to be equal to the savings that accrued to the state from the closure of state prisons during the preceding fiscal year

Existing law establishes the Youth Reinvestment Grant Program (YRGP) within the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) for the purpose of granting funds, as specified. (Welfare & Institution Code § 1450.)

Existing law requires that three percent of funds allocated to YRGP be used for the purpose of implementing diversion programs for Native American children that use trauma-informed, community-based, and health-based interventions. (Welfare & Institution Code § 1453, subd. (a).)

Existing law states that priority must be given to diversion programs addressing the needs of Native American children who experience high rates of juvenile arrest, suicide, and alcohol abuse, among other things. (Welfare & Institution Code § 1453, subd. (b).)

Existing law requires that a specified percentage of funds be allocated for the purpose of implementing diversion programs for children throughout local jurisdictions that are trauma-informed, evidence-based, and culturally relevant, among other things. (Welfare & Institution Code § 1454 subds. (a) & (b).)

Existing law states that jurisdictions with the highest need must be provide a certain minimum of funds and defines “highest needs” as areas with high juvenile arrest rates and high levels of racial or ethnic disparity in juveniles arrest rates. (Welfare & Institution Code §1454, subd. (b).)

Existing law provides that BSCC is responsible for oversight and accountability of the program and that it must track funding, provide guidance to programs, and contract with a research firm to conduct a statewide evaluation of the grant, as specified. (Welfare & Institution Code § 1455.)

Existing law states that the YRGP funds must be allocated by the BSCC through a competitive grant process, as specified. (Welfare & Institution Code §1458.)

Existing law establishes the Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) in the California Health and Human Services Agency, whose mission is to promote trauma responsive, culturally informed services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system that support their successful transition to adulthood and help them become responsible, thriving, and engaged members of the community. (Welfare & Institution Code §2200, subds. (a) & (b).)

Existing law provides that all juvenile justice grant administration functions in the Board of State and Community Corrections shall be moved to the OYCR no later than January 1, 2025. (Welfare & Institution Code §2200, subd. (h).)

Existing law establishes the California Violence Intervention Program (CalVIP), to be administered by the BSCC. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (a).)

Existing law states that the purpose of CalVIP is to improve public health and safety by supporting effective community gun violence reduction initiatives in communities that are disproportionately impacted by community gun violence. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (b).)

Existing law defines “community gun violence” to mean intentional acts of interpersonal violence involving a firearm, generally committed in public areas by individuals who are not intimately related to the victim, and which result in physical injury, emotional harm, or death. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (b).)

Existing law states that CalVIP grants shall be used to develop, support, expand, and replicate evidence-based community gun violence reduction initiatives, including, without limitation, hospital-based violence intervention programs, evidence-based street outreach programs, and focused-deterrence strategies, that seek to interrupt cycles of community gun violence and retaliation in order to reduce the incidence of homicides, shootings, and aggravated assaults. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (c).)

Existing law states that CalVIP grants shall be made on a competitive basis to cities that are disproportionately impacted by community gun violence, to community-based organizations that serve the residents of those cities, including tribal governments, and to counties that have on or more cities disproportionately impacted by community gun violence within their jurisdictions. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (d).)

Existing law states that for purposes of CalVIP, a city is disproportionately impacted by community gun violence if any of the following are true:

- The city experienced 20 or more homicides per calendar year during two or more of the three calendar years immediately preceding the grant application;
- The city experienced 10 or more homicides per calendar year and had a homicide rate that was at least 50% higher than the statewide homicide rate during two or more of the three calendar years immediately preceding the grant application; or,
- An applicant otherwise demonstrates a unique and compelling need for additional resources to address the impact of community gun violence in the applicant's community. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (e)(1)-(3).)

Existing law states that an applicant for a CalVIP grant shall submit a proposal, in a form prescribed by the board, as specified. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (f).)

Existing law states that in awarding CalVIP grants, the board shall give preference to applicants whose grant proposals demonstrate the greatest likelihood of reducing the incidence of community gun violence in the applicant's community, without contributing to mass incarceration. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (g).)

Existing law requires the amount of funds awarded to an applicant to be commensurate with the scope of the applicant's proposal and the applicant's demonstrated need for additional resources to address community gun violence in the applicant's community. (Penal Code §14131, subd. (h).)

This bill establishes the CVIGP and requires it to be administered by the HHS to provide funding to local community programs for community-driven solutions to decrease violence in neighborhoods and schools.

This bill requires eligible programs to include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- Evidence-based, focused-deterrence collaborative programs that conduct outreach to targeted gangs and offer supportive services in order to preemptively reduce and eliminate violence and gang involvement;
- Programs that create and enhance recreation- and health-based interventions for youth during peak times of violence;
- Programs that implement evidence-based interventions for pupils impacted by trauma for the improvement in the health and well-being of the youth and school and community stability;

- Youth diversion programs that promote positive youth development by relying on responses that prevent a youth's involvement or further involvement in the justice system; and,
- The creation and operation of school-based health centers.

This bill requires the HHSA to develop an application process and criteria for funding.

This bill provides that grants shall be made on a competitive basis with preference to cities and local jurisdictions that are disproportionately impacted by violence and gang involvement, and with preference to community-based organizations that serve the residents of those cities and local jurisdictions.

This bill requires HHSA, when implementing the grant program, to work with relevant stakeholders to promote and implement the grant program in a manner that effectively reaches a wide geography throughout the state and ensures that regions most impacted by violence and gang involvement are adequately considered with an emphasis on addressing the violence prevention and gang deterrence needs within these regions.

This bill requires applicants seeking grant funding to implement evidenced-based interventions for pupils impacted by trauma to demonstrate how they will prioritize interventions for pupils most impacted by trauma and typically unable to access traditional services, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are low income or homeless;
- Pupils who display symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or severe trauma-related symptoms;
- Pupils who are members of immigrant and refugee groups;
- Pupils with exceptional needs; and,
- Pupils who interact with child protective systems or who have had contact with the juvenile justice system.

This bill establishes the CVIG Fund within the State Treasury and states that moneys in the fund shall be made available, only upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the agency for the CVIG.

This bill requires the Director of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's Office, on or before July 31, 2025, and every year thereafter, to calculate savings that accrued from the closure of state prisons during prior fiscal year.

This bill requires the Director of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's Office, when calculating cost savings, to use actual data or best available estimates where actual data is not available.

This bill requires the Director of Finance to calculate the average between actual data and best available estimates from prison closures and once finalized, cannot be adjusted.

This bill requires the State Controller, upon appropriation by the legislature, to transfer before August 15, 2025, and before August 15 of each fiscal year thereafter, an amount of money from

the General Fund to the CVIGP equal to the finalized savings estimate that accrued to the state from the closure of state prisons during the preceding fiscal year.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the Author:

By advancing sensible legislation and budget items to improve public safety and advance justice and equity, the State Legislature has decreased the number of incarcerated people in California. It is imperative that the resulting savings be reinvested into effective strategies proven to further reduce crime and violence. AB 2064 will capture the savings from the closure of prisons and reinvest those funds in programs with proven success. By keeping the funding within our crime prevention budget rather than sending it back to the General Fund, we send a message that our efforts to reduce crime are continuous and we provide much needed resources for some outstanding programs.

2. CalVIP Grants

The CalVIP grant program was established in 2017 and replaced the California Gang Reduction Intervention and Prevention grant program. According to the BSCC website

In October 2019 Governor Newsom signed the Break the Cycle of Violence Act (AB 1603). AB 1603 codified the establishment of CalVIP and defined its purpose: to improve public health and safety by supporting effective violence reduction initiatives in communities that are disproportionately impacted by violence, particularly group-member involved homicides, shootings, and aggravated assaults. The Break the Cycle of Violence act specifies that CalVIP grants shall be used to support, expand and replicate evidence-based violence reduction initiatives, including but not limited to: hospital-based violence intervention programs, evidence-based street outreach programs, and focused deterrence strategies.

These initiatives should seek to interrupt cycles of violence and retaliation in order to reduce the incidence of homicides, shootings, and aggravated assaults and shall be primarily focused on providing violence intervention services to the small segment of the population that is identified as having the highest risk of perpetrating or being victimized by violence in the near future. (https://www.bscc.ca.gov/s_cpgpcalvipgrant/)

In 2021, the state budget allocated a onetime augmentation of 200 million dollars to be spread across 3 fiscal years (2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24) to CalVIP. In addition, the yearly state budget has allocated 29 million in 2019, 8 million in 2020, and 74 million in 2021 (this allocation was a portion of the aforementioned augmentation). The yearly cohorts of grantees are available for reference on the [BSCC's website](#), under the California Violence Intervention & Prevention Grant section.

This bill would create a new fund with a similar focus as the CalVIP program.

3. Argument in Support

According to the California Public Defenders Association:

AB 2064 creates the Community Violence Interdiction Program within the California Health and Human Services Agency to fund community-driven solutions to decrease violence in neighborhoods and schools. Eligible programs will focus on collaborative programs that reduce gang violence and youth involvement in the justice system, provide recreation, health and support for youth and youth who have experienced trauma and school-based health centers.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), violence is an urgent health problem:

Decades of research, prevention, and services have provided valuable insights into various forms of violence and effective ways to prevent and respond to them. One consistent finding is the strong interconnection between different forms of violence. Research has shown that people who experience one form of violence are more likely to experience other forms. Additionally, people who engage in violence in one context (e.g., towards peers) are also likely to be violent in other contexts (e.g., towards dating partners). Research has also shown that various forms of violence share common consequences that can negatively impact mental, emotional, physical, and social well-being. These consequences may contribute to chronic health conditions like cancer, cardiovascular disease, lung disease, or diabetes. Lastly, the research has found that different forms of violence also share common risk and protective factors. Understanding the overlapping causes of violence and the things that can protect people and communities can help us better prevent violence in all its forms. ([CDC Violence Prevention](#))

The CDC points out that young people are disproportionately impacted by violence in their communities as illustrated by over 50% of U.S. homicides in 2020 occurred among those age 15 to 34. Even those who are not injured or killed do not escape unscathed. About 64% of U.S. adults reported that they had experienced at least one type of adverse childhood experience (ACE) including violence. These experiences are connected to long-term health effects. Again, the CDC opines that “preventing ACEs may avert up to 21 million cases of depression, 1.9 million cases of heart disease, and 2.5 million cases of overweight/obesity.” ([CDC Injury and Violence Prevention](#))

As public defenders we have seen repeatedly youth and adults who come from communities with a lack of resources for health, recreation, mental health and support for trauma who end up in the criminal legal system. Many, if not most, of them suffer from untreated trauma which led to their involvement in the criminal legal system.

By treating trauma and violence as a health issue AB 2064 is an efficient, sensible way of preventing and or mitigating the harms that affect California communities, businesses and individuals. It is a crucial first step in breaking the cycle of violence and harm.