

PRESS RELEASE

THE PUBLIC SAFETY & SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

ENDORSES:

THE COMMUNITY VIOLENCE REDUCTION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT

Oakland, CA – May 9, 2024 – The city of Oakland Public Safety & Services Oversight Commission (SSOC) has declared its support for the passage of the Oakland Community Violence Reduction and Emergency Response Act. This measure aims to replace and enhance the existing Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act, known as Measure Z (MZ), which the SSOC oversees. MZ is set to expire this December, as is the SSOC. Funds from the new measure would be used to (1) reduce homicides, robberies, car-jackings and break-ins, domestic violence, and gun-related violence; (2) improve 911 response times; and (3) reduce the incidence of human trafficking, including the sexual exploitation of minors.

The new measure would replace the eight-member City Council-appointed, Mayoral-approved SSOC with a five-member Mayoral-appointed, City Council-approved Public Safety & Planning Oversight Commission (SPOC). The SPOC would be tasked with developing a Four-Year Community Violence Reduction Plan that the City Council may approve or reject. It also increases the minimum staffing levels for sworn police from 678 to 700 officers as a starting point for qualifying to receive funding. It also introduces an additional accountability measure by appointing a budget auditor.

Like Measure Z, the Oakland Police Department (OPD) and Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) would receive a 60/40 split of the proceeds generated from an increased parcel and parking tax. The Fire Department's portion of the proceeds would increase from a fixed amount of \$2 million to \$3 million. The majority of the funds distributed to DVP would continue to be used to fund the community-based organizations that implement various strategies that are designed to interrupt the cycle of violence and recidivism for Oakland's most at-risk populations. Without funds from a new proposal, DVP may not be able to fully execute all of its strategies as they're currently designed.

Operation Ceasefire, a proven strategy for reducing gun violence and co-run by OPD, DVP, and the faith-based community, also receives a portion of its funding via MZ and would continue to be able to do so through this new measure. All three groups have been invited to the May 20th SSOC meeting at 6:30 pm in Oakland City Hall, City Council chambers, if you would like to join our discussion. Multiple OPD geographical policing strategies, such as Community Resource Officers (CRO), would also be eligible to continue to be augmented with funds generated by this new measure.

Going forward, the SSOC is calling upon all Oakland residents to ensure this vital new measure appears on the November ballot by signing the Oaklanders Together petition by their May 21st deadline. You can view the recordings of the SSOC's March (item 6) and April (item 8) meetings on our webpage listed below to learn more. Oaklanders Together is a community-based coalition that agrees on a simple premise: immediate action is needed to reduce crime in Oakland and make neighborhoods safer through a balanced approach by investing in both law enforcement and community-based violence prevention measures. To endorse the new measure, visit oaklanderstogether.com.

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