

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, ranking members Miner and France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Regina Griffin. I currently live in Southbury, CT, but grew up in Waterbury. Ever since I learned of Project Longevity, I've hoped that they might be persuaded to set up in Waterbury as well. Their efforts in the past have impressed me—how could they not?

But now, given the alarming rise in gun violence in our cities during 2020, with the pandemic and the resulting economic crisis worsening so many of our fellow citizens' lives, I have a question regarding the budget. Is this the best time to reduce the funding of a successful approach to reducing gun violence?

My native city saw homicides increase by THREE times. Other cities across the state also saw a horrifying rise in the number of such deaths.

While I completely understand that the costs of the pandemic and the economic crisis it caused are behind your efforts to reduce spending here, and I applaud your search to find places to cut costs, it seems that the danger of doing that in this instance is too dangerous. Lives are at stake.

Thank you.

Regina Griffin
Southbury, CT