

**Council of the District of Columbia
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY & PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION
NOTICE OF JOINT PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004**

**COUNCILMEMBER CHARLES ALLEN, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY & PUBLIC SAFETY**

AND

**AT-LARGE COUNCILMEMBER ANITA BONDS, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION**

**ANNOUNCE A JOINT PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE ON
GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION INITIATIVES IN THE DISTRICT**

Thursday, July 29, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Virtual Hearing via Zoom

To Watch Live:

<https://dccouncil.us/council-videos/>

<http://video.oct.dc.gov/DCC/jw.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/CMcharlesallen/>

On Thursday, July 29, 2021, Councilmember Charles Allen, Chairperson of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, and Councilmember Anita Bonds, Chairperson of the Committee on Housing and Executive Administration, will convene a joint public oversight roundtable to discuss “Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction Initiatives in the District,” including Building Blocks D.C. The roundtable will be conducted virtually via Zoom beginning at 9:30 a.m. **The Committees will only hear live testimony from government witnesses during this roundtable.**

As of July 23, there have been 108 homicides in the District – 90 of which involved a firearm. During that same period of time, 973 robberies (501 of which involved a gun), 866 assaults with a dangerous weapon (473 of which involved a gun), and 92 sexual assaults (5 of which involved a gun) have been reported. On Friday, July 16, six-year-old Nyiah Courtney was shot and killed during a drive-by shooting in Congress Heights that left five others wounded. The next day, three people were shot outside of Nationals Park. This joint public oversight roundtable will discuss the District government’s responses to these shootings and the operations and metrics of government violence prevention and reduction initiatives.

Several arms of the District government are charged with preventing and reducing gun violence, including through the traditional law enforcement and public health-based strategies described below:

- [Building Blocks D.C.](#) is a new public health-based approach to violence prevention that focuses on the small number of individuals responsible for a significant percent of gun violence in the District and the small number of places where most gun violence occurs, also known as “person-based” and “place-based” approaches, respectively. Specifically, Building Blocks D.C. is prioritizing the 151 blocks (2% of the District) that account for 41% of all gunshot-related crimes in 2020. The initiative is led by the District’s new Director of Gun Violence Prevention – a position funded by the Council this fiscal year – and is intended to bring together the efforts of many District and federal agencies through a “whole government” approach to gun violence. The Director reports directly to the District of Columbia’s City Administrator, and has broad latitude to coordinate gun violence responses across various agencies.
- The [Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement \(“ONSE”\)](#) is tasked with identifying and engaging individuals determined to be at high risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence. Since its inception, ONSE has run the Pathways Program, a transitional employment program that provides education, training, and employment opportunities to these high-risk individuals. ONSE also manages the Violence Intervention Initiative, which employs contractors to mediate conflicts in the community before they turn into violence, as well as several other initiatives.
- The Office of the Attorney General runs a similar violence intervention program, known as [Cure the Streets](#), which also follows a public health-based approach to crime prevention through the operation of six sites in Wards 5, 7, and 8 with some of the highest rates of gun violence.
- The Metropolitan Police Department, through its [Summer Crime Prevention Initiative \(“SCI”\)](#), identifies specific areas experiencing high rates of violent crime. The SCI’s six priority areas for this summer are allocated additional law enforcement resources, and the SCI also incorporates youth and family outreach and programming in collaboration with other local and federal agencies.

Many other District agencies are part of the District’s violence prevention and reduction efforts, including the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services and its [Credible Messenger Initiative](#) and the Department of Parks and Recreation’s [Roving Leaders](#).

Now that Building Blocks D.C. has been in operation for several months, and in light of the persistence of violent crime in the District – and particularly homicides – the Committees are holding this joint public oversight roundtable to examine the District’s violence prevention and reduction efforts this summer, with a focus on Building Blocks D.C. and the Summer Crime Prevention Initiative. Topics for discussion will include the initiatives’ structure, operations, community engagement, agency partnerships, communications, funding, and outcomes.

Public witnesses who would like to testify at the roundtable are welcome to submit written statements for the official record by emailing them to the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety at judiciary@dccouncil.us no later than the **close of business on Friday, August 13, 2021.**