

Community and School Safety

Recommendation

Provides \$38.7 million to enhance community and school safety statewide. Funds will support programming and interventions to stop violent crime, ensure safe gun storage, and bolster existing funding for school safety grants.

Table 1: Allocation of Funds for Community and School Safety

	Recurring	Nonrecurring
Community Safety Grants		\$5,000,000
Body Camera Grants		\$10,000,000
Safe Storage		\$1,200,000
Violence Education and Prevention	\$2,500,000	
Court Reminder System		\$25,000
School Safety Grants	\$20,000,000	
Grand Total	\$22,500,000	\$16,225,000

Statement of Need

Invests funds to expand safety intervention and education programming, reduce unintentional gun deaths, and enhance public safety statewide.

- Between April 2020 and March 2021, 70% of firearm-related emergency department (ED) visits in North Carolina were due to unintentional injuries. ED visits due to firearm injuries from assault also rose during this period, peaking in June 2020.¹
- According to a Johns Hopkins School of Public Health survey, firearms owners nationwide stored less than half of all firearms safely in 2018.²
- North Carolina experienced a 19% increase in children aged 15 and younger with charges for nonviolent firearm offenses between FY 2018-19 and FY 2020-21.³
- In the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency department visits for suspected adolescent suicide attempts increased by 31%.⁴
- In December 2021, Life Safety Tips reported a 77% increase in North Carolina students at risk of hurting themselves or knowing a fellow student who is at risk since March 2020.⁵

Recommendation Detail

Community Safety

- Invests \$5 million nonrecurring for a violence intervention and prevention competitive grant program through the Governor's Crime Commission to expand the use of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs statewide.

¹ [NC FASTER Fact Sheet, 2021](#)

² [Survey: More Than Half of U.S. Gun Owners Do Not Safely Store Their Guns, 2018](#)

³ [Kids Are Buying and Selling Guns Online, N&O, 2021](#)

⁴ [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

⁵ [Say Something Anonymous Reporting System Data, 2021](#)

- Provides \$10 million nonrecurring for a competitive grant program through the Governor’s Crime Commission to cover the purchase costs of body-worn cameras for law enforcement agencies in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties.
- Provides \$2.5 million recurring to the Division of Juvenile Justice to be distributed to Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils to expand evidence-based violence education and prevention programming for at risk and juvenile justice-involved youth.
- Provides \$1 million nonrecurring to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for the bulk purchase of gun locks. The department will send these locks to sheriffs’ offices statewide for distribution to gun owners, increasing the rate of safe gun storage. An additional \$200,000 will be used to develop a statewide safe storage awareness campaign and to cover administrative costs related to the distribution of gun locks.
- Provides \$25,000 to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to study how to enhance AOC’s Automated Court Event Notification (ACEN) capabilities.

Safer Schools

- Provides \$20 million to the Department of Public Instruction to create average daily membership-based school safety grants and make permanent the competitive school safety grants in SL 2021-180. Public school districts may use the grants to support students in crisis and provide school safety and mental health training.

Expected Impact

This proposal will support community and school safety efforts across the state. Expected impacts include:

- Providing at least 100 grants to community and healthcare organizations to implement evidence-based violence intervention programming.
- Supplying up to 20,000 body cameras for law enforcement agencies in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties.
- Increasing the total number of guns stored safely, reducing the rate of unintentional gun-related accidents and deaths.
- Distributing school safety grants to all 115 North Carolina public school districts.