

Department of Planning and Budget

2021 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB2231

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/>	In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrolled

2. Patron: Gilbert

3. Committee: Committee Referral Pending

4. Title: Group Violence Intervention Board; Division of Group Violence Intervention.

5. Summary: The proposed legislation establishes the Group Violence Intervention Board (Board) to coordinate and assist federal, state, and local group violence intervention efforts. The proposed legislation also requires that all agencies of the Commonwealth provide assistance to the Board upon request. Furthermore, the proposed legislation establishes within the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) a Division of Group Violence Intervention (Division). The proposed legislation provides that the Division is responsible for (i) coordinating the efforts of members of state and local law enforcement, community members, and social services providers to combat group violence; (ii) serving as a clearinghouse for research, best practices, and strategies that may be utilized in the implementation, execution, and evaluation of group violence interventions; and (iii) implementing and administering various federal, state, and local grant funds that aid group violence intervention efforts. Finally, the proposed legislation creates the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund, for the purposes of awarding grants on a competitive basis to organizations such as state and local law-enforcement agencies, local attorneys for the Commonwealth, localities, social services providers, and nonprofit organizations that are engaged in group violence intervention efforts that are substantially similar to Operation Ceasefire as implemented in Boston, Massachusetts and documented by the National Institute of Justice. The proposed legislation also creates the Project Exile Grant Fund, which provides money to localities, social services providers, or nonprofit organizations that assist former gang members or individuals attempting to leave gangs with mentoring services, employment opportunities, job training, educational opportunities such as GED classes or vocational training, housing assistance, tattoo removal, or any other services approved by the Division.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes, Item 406.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary (see Item 8 below).

8. Fiscal Implications: The proposed legislation establishes the Group Violence Intervention Board (Board) comprised of five non-legislative citizen members appointed by the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor. The Board sets policy on coordination and assistance in federal, state, and local group violence initiatives. The Board also has the power and duty to apply, receive, and issue grants from the federal Project Safe Neighborhood Block Grant Program, the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund, and the Project Exile

Grant Fund. It can also establish guidelines for the issuance of grants from the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund and the Project Exile Grant Fund, and liaison with federal authorities for the purposes of sharing information and coordinating group violence intervention efforts being undertaken at the federal, state, and local level. The proposed legislation also requires the Board to submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly as an executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Board no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly.

The proposed legislation also requires that members of the Board be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary costs, pursuant to existing law. DCJS estimates that based on the number of members, the number of meetings, the annual estimated costs for reasonable reimbursement would be \$5,500. The estimate is based on current expenditures incurred by DCJS's existing boards.

The proposed legislation defines "group intervention violence" to mean comprehensive community-based initiatives, substantially similar to Operation Ceasefire as implemented in Boston, Massachusetts, and documented by the National Institute of Justice, that are carried out by a partnership consisting of members of law enforcement, community members, and social services providers and that are designed to reduce street group-involved violence and homicide, minimize harm to communities by replacing enforcement with deterrence where possible, and foster stronger relationships between members of law enforcement and the communities they serve. To support this initiative, the proposed legislation establishes the Division of Group Violence Intervention (Division), within DCJS. The proposed legislation states that Division shall have the following powers and duties: (1) organize, supervise, and perform functions consistent with the proposed legislation; (2) coordinate the efforts of state and local law-enforcement agencies, community members, and social services providers to combat group violence; (3) serve as a clearinghouse for research, best practices, and strategies that may be utilized in the implementation, execution, and evaluation of group violence interventions; and (4) implement Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Programs authorized by the Group Violence Intervention Board pursuant to the proposed legislation.

The proposed legislation also creates two positions, the Executive Director of the Division and at least one research analyst with expertise in group violence intervention. The Executive Director of the Division is granted the following general powers: (1) to employ personnel and assistance necessary for the operation of the Division and the purposes stated in the proposed legislation; (2) to make and enter into all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of the duties of the Division and the execution of its powers under proposed legislation, including contracts with the United States, other states, and agencies and governmental subdivisions of the Commonwealth; and (3) to accept grants from the United States government and agencies and instrumentalities thereof and any other source. DCJS reports that that the fiscal impact for these two positions is as follows: (1) \$156,874 annually for the Division Director, which includes \$100,000 salary, and the remainder for benefits and personnel costs; and (2) \$132,254 for the research analyst position, which includes \$80,000 for salary and the remainder for benefits and personnel costs.

Finally, the bill creates in the state treasury two special non-reverting funds to be known as the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund and the Project Exile Grant Fund (Funds). All moneys appropriated by the General Assembly for the Funds, and from any other sources, public or private, are to be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Funds. Moneys in the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund are to be used for the purposes of awarding grants on a competitive basis to organizations such as state and local law-enforcement agencies, local attorneys for the Commonwealth, localities, social services providers, and nonprofit organizations that are engaged in group violence intervention efforts that are substantially similar to Operation Ceasefire as implemented in Boston, Massachusetts and documented by the National Institute of Justice. Moneys in the Project Exile Grant Fund are to be used solely for the purposes of awarding grants to localities, social services providers, or nonprofit organizations that assist former gang members or individuals attempting to leave gangs with mentoring services, employment opportunities, job training, educational opportunities such as GED classes or vocational training, housing assistance, tattoo removal, or any other services approved by the Division.

According to DCJS, a program coordinator would be required to administer and implement the Project Safe Neighborhood Grant Program. DCJS reports that based on current program coordinator positions, this position would result in a fiscal impact of \$119,944 annually, which includes \$70,000 for salary, and the remainder for benefits and personnel costs. Additionally, DCJS states that in the event that money be appropriated into the Project Ceasefire Grant Fund or the Project Exile Grant Fund, at least one additional grant monitor would be needed to administer these grant programs as well. DCJS estimates that the fiscal impact for the additional grant monitor position would be \$119,944 annually, which includes \$70,000 for salary and the remainder for benefits and personnel costs.

The proposed legislation also states that all agencies of the Commonwealth are to provide assistance to the Board upon request. The nature of such assistance that may be necessary in the future is unknown. Therefore, it is unknown to what extent, if any, future assistance provided to the Board by other agencies of the Commonwealth would result in a fiscal impact to those agencies.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Criminal Justice Services; all entities of the Commonwealth.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.