

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE AND BRIAN WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING ON A CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIVE CITYWIDE STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

WHEREAS, The discontinued SOAR (Street Outreach, Advocacy, and Response) Boston program was aimed at violence intervention, reducing recidivism, and supporting gang-involved youth by building meaningful relationships and facilitating employment and education, until the program was discontinued in 2022 as part of the city's decision to reshape its approach to youth violence prevention; *and*

WHEREAS, Incidents of youth violence are symptomatic of deeper societal issues, including the lack of opportunity and support for the city's youth, thereby necessitating a comprehensive and sustained response from all sectors of the community; *and*

WHEREAS, The philanthropic and non-profit sector plays an indispensable role in funding and supporting initiatives aimed at combating youth violence, offering resources, expertise, and innovative approaches that complement and enhance public sector efforts, and thus their continued and increased engagement is essential for the success of citywide violence prevention efforts; *and*

WHEREAS, The pervasive issue of youth violence is fundamentally a manifestation of a lack of accessible opportunities, with studies indicating a direct correlation between the expansion of community engagement and the reduction of violence; *and*

WHEREAS, There exists a critical need to reconceptualize our approach to youth, not as problems to be contained but as reservoirs of potential who are eager to contribute positively to their community, if given the chance and the right support; *and*

WHEREAS, Mayor Wu recently convened a multi-day workshop on evidence-informed violence intervention strategies, which resulted in a draft comprehensive violence intervention strategy; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the City of Boston hold a hearing on a cross-sector citywide youth violence prevention strategy that aims to scale up community and youth activities, mentorship programs, and job opportunities, particularly in communities historically impacted by gun violence, acknowledging the heightened need for engagement in prevention, programming, and employment.