

# Rep. Bowen: Applauds investments in violence prevention

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MILWAUKEE – In response to Governor Evers announcing a \$25 million investment in violence prevention efforts earlier today, Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“I am happy to see Governor Evers take this important step and make this critical initial investment kickstarting a Wisconsin Violence Prevention Fund. I have long been a major proponent of exactly this approach, and it is refreshing to have a Governor who actually recognizes the need for this type of programming. The timing of today’s announcement couldn’t have come at a better time as well – it is no secret that violent incidents, including violent incidents involving children, have spiked in Milwaukee and around the state and country since the beginning of the pandemic, and we must ensure that we are making significant, targeted investments like this in violence prevention programs in order to make our communities safer.”

Earlier today, Governor Evers announced that he will be spending \$25 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds on violence prevention efforts in Wisconsin. Included in these investments is \$17 million allocated to the Medical College of Wisconsin’s Violence Prevention Project, of which \$6.6 million will be used to support research, data collection, education, and community engagement efforts around violence prevention as a public health issue, while the remaining \$10.4 million will be used to fund a competitive grant process for municipalities to support violence prevention efforts. Additionally, \$8 million will go directly to the Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention to assist in their ongoing efforts to reduce violence in Milwaukee.

“While I am grateful for these steps that will undoubtedly reduce violence in our

communities, this is a one-time infusion of funds where we need continued commitment to evidence-based programs that will reduce violence in Milwaukee and across the state. I am truly thankful to both Governor Evers and President Biden for committing to funding violence prevention efforts, but the power to create sustainable, long-term funding for these programs ultimately rests with the Legislature and active bipartisanship. I think many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will agree that measures should be taken to make all of our communities safer, and until we have a strong, long-term financial commitment to proven violence prevention actions, we will unfortunately continue to see unnecessary violence in our communities. That's why, as in Sessions past, I introduced AB 458 this year to sustainably fund violence prevention efforts statewide. And although none of my Republican colleagues have signed onto that proposal as of yet, there is still time for them to cosponsor and bring that bill up for a hearing and a vote. Let's make 2021 the year we finally make violence prevention a priority, not just for now, but forever."