

Recommendations: Effects of Community Gun Violence in Virginia

JLARC staff typically make recommendations to address findings during reviews. Staff also sometimes propose policy options rather than recommendations. The three most common reasons staff propose policy options rather than recommendations are: (1) the action proposed is a policy judgment best made by the General Assembly or other elected officials, (2) the evidence indicates that addressing a report finding is not necessarily required, but doing so could be beneficial, or (3) there are multiple ways in which a report finding could be addressed and there is insufficient evidence of a single best way to address the finding.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1

The General Assembly may wish to consider amending the Appropriation Act to establish Safer Communities as a biennially reverting special fund administered by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, instead of appropriating funds directly to recipients, to give recipient localities sufficient time to use the funding for effective planning and program implementation. (Chapter 5)

RECOMMENDATION 2

The General Assembly may wish to consider amending the Appropriation Act to direct the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to periodically evaluate if changes are needed to the distribution of Safer Communities funding among Virginia localities and make any recommendations for changes in the DCJS Office of Safer Communities' annual report to the General Assembly. (Chapter 5)

RECOMMENDATION 3

The General Assembly may wish to consider amending the Appropriation Act to direct the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to periodically evaluate if changes are needed to funding or program qualifications for the Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund or the Operation Ceasefire Grant Fund and make any recommendations for changes in the DCJS Office of Safer Communities' annual report. (Chapter 5)

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Department of Criminal Justice Services should expand its community of practice meetings to include regular meetings of representatives from Virginia's nine higher gun violence localities: Danville, Hampton, Hopewell, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, Portsmouth, Richmond, and the City of Roanoke. (Chapter 5)

Policy Options to Consider

POLICY OPTION 1

The General Assembly could amend the Appropriation Act to extend Safer Communities funding to the cities of Danville, Hampton, Hopewell, Newport News, and Petersburg. (Chapter 5)
