

February 27, 2023

Mayor Quinton Lucas
Kansas City Missouri City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64108

City of Kansas City Councilmembers and Mayor,

I am writing in support of Resolution 230129 and Ordinance 230160. The Health Forward Foundation supports the City contribution of \$30 million over the next five years to fund community-based violence reduction strategies as outlined in the [KC Blueprint](#) for Violence Prevention.

Kansas City, Missouri is the 37th largest United States city, yet suffers with the 5th highest violence crime rate per capita. Our city is at endemic levels of violence with each of the last three years having been the most violent on record. We have collectively lost 505 sons, daughters, and children to homicide.

Significant and sustained multi-year public funding of community-based violence reduction work is a critical first step as additional investments are catalyzed. With urgency, mobilizing funds, leveraging public and private sources, are required to deploy proven violence reduction strategies in communities disproportionately impacted.

Beyond the numerous lives that can be saved, the quality of life, health, wellbeing and prosperity of our region will increase through investments into violence prevention. Studies by the RAND Corporation and data from Cohen and Piquero (2009) and Miller, Cohen, and Wiersema (1996) indicate a single homicide results in more than \$8 million in costs to society. Over the next five years if the conservative goal of reducing homicides by five percent annually is obtained, this would result in an overall societal savings of \$312 million.

Please accept this letter of support enabling our great city to lead in the expansion of community-driven, evidence-based violence reduction measures. We implore your positive action and ongoing support building capacity for a safer and healthier city.

Respectfully,



Qiana Thomason
President/CEO, Health Forward

**OUR
PURPOSE**

Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems.