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MEMPHIS YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVES HIGHLIGHTED DURING FEDERAL TEAM VISIT

Memphis, Tenn. - Federal officials from the White House and the Departments of Justice, Department of Education, Corporation of National Community Service, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor are meeting with local leaders on Memphis's efforts to implement its comprehensive youth violence prevention and reduction strategy. Recently, more resources and funding have been allocated in high-crime areas like Frayser and Northaven to address blight and neighborhood deterioration. The additional funding will support an aggressive campaign between local government and community leaders to fund revitalization strategies - demolitions, home improvements, and reuse of abandoned buildings. This infusion of funds in the Frayser and Northaven communities is to provide a safe environment for children before an act of crime or criminal behavior occurs.

Memphis is one of six cities participating in the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention launched by President Obama in 2010. These cities are using multi-disciplinary partnerships, balanced approaches, and data-driven strategies to engage youth and to reduce violence. Memphis's youth violence plan is a component of Operation: Safe Community 2012-2016 Goal #5 *Reduce Youth Violence*. Supported by public and private partnerships the goal highlights 13 enforcement, suppression, intervention and re-entry strategies. To enhance the quality of programming and optimize resources, strategies are aligned with several public safety initiatives including the Memphis Police Department's Community Outreach Program, Community LIFT, Shelby County Defending Childhood Initiative (DCI) and others.

The five-day visit to Memphis will include "The Fatherhood Connection," a round table discussion on local Fatherhood Initiatives and their impact in the community. The federal team will also attend a Symposium on Youth Re-entry, moderated by TN Board of Probation and Parole Chairman Charles Traughber and visits and observations of several DCI partner organizations including the Memphis Child Advocacy Center and Family Safety Center. "United by Faith" Police & Clergy Conference will emphasize effective communication, relationship-building and coordinated collaboration between police and clergy.



The Departments of Justice, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy are the Forum's participating federal partners. In addition to Memphis, the other participating cities include Boston; Chicago; Detroit; Salinas, Calif.; and San Jose, Calif. The cities were selected based on need, geographic diversity, as well as willingness and capacity to undertake the comprehensive efforts that are the hallmark of the Forum. Memphis has demonstrated its commitment to reducing youth violence over the long run by investing significant amounts of time and energy to plan and implement strategic and data driven strategies.

Mayor A C Wharton and Bill Gibbons, Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security Commissioner and Operation: Safe Community Chair first presented Memphis's comprehensive strategy to address youth violence and gang activity at the Summit on Preventing Youth Violence, April 4-5, 2011, in Washington, D.C. More details about the Forum and summaries of the city plans are available at: www.findyouthinfo.gov or <http://operationsafecommunity.org/theplan> .

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