

# WHAT IS THE NEAR ACT?



**The Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2016 (NEAR Act) is a comprehensive public health-based approach to violence prevention and intervention, addressing the root causes of violent and “black market” activities in a long-term, sustainable way. Collaboration among various government and community stakeholders lies at the heart of the law.**

## FOUR MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE NEAR ACT



# 1

### **Identifies and engages people at risk of being involved in violence through the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement**

The ONSE will identify and recruit individuals determined to be at high risk of participating in, or being a victim of, community violence in a program combining evidence-based counseling, mentorship, and workforce development, with the goal of preventing community violence without increasing police violence or presence. The program is modeled after an innovative and successful initiative in Richmond, California.

# 2

### **Links behavioral health issues and crime through the Community Crime Prevention Team Program**

The Act establishes a new program that will pair mental and behavioral health professionals with Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers. The teams will identify and serve individuals with unmet needs who frequently interact with police.

# 3

### **Takes a public health approach to public safety by establishing the Office of Violence Prevention and Health Equity in the Department of Health**

The OVPHE will be charged with developing and implementing a public health strategy to combat the spread of violence using risk assessment tools, cognitive and family-based therapy, and service coordination. The OVPHE will also place trained personnel in every hospital emergency department to respond to victims of crime immediately and deescalate violent situations.

# 4

### **Uses open data and training to improve policing**

MPD will be required to collect data on felony crimes, stops and frisks, and use-of-force incidents. The Act also requires continuing education for officers on community policing; recognizing and preventing biased-based policing; the use of force; limitations on chokeholds and neck restraints; mental and behavioral health awareness; and linguistic and cultural competency. All measures designed to create transparency for the community as it concerns the actual actions of police departments.