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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DISTRICT ATTORNEY STOLLSTEIMER ANNOUNCES \$2 MILLION GRANT
FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND
DELINQUENCY TO SUPPORT GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN
CHESTER**

Media, PA - Delaware County District Attorney Jack Stollsteimer today announced that the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) had awarded \$2,000,000 to the County to support the gun violence prevention efforts in Chester being led by his office.

“Today’s announcement is the result of two years of work by my office to support a collaborative approach to reducing gun violence in the City of Chester. This collaboration – involving my office, the Chester Police Department, and the Mayor’s office -- has yielded concrete and demonstrable results - which is why PCCD looked so favorably upon our application. There is much more work to be done, but this funding provides us with an array of new tools that we believe will contribute to lower gun violence and improved quality of life for the City and its residents,” said Stollsteimer.

The funding awarded by PCCD is specifically designated for Violence Intervention and Prevention. The applications were competitive, and Delaware County was one of only four applicants to receive the maximum grant amount. The term of the grant is for two years. The application requested funding for a range of uses, including community engagement activities, illegal dumpsite cleanup, and additional resources for law enforcement. The grant will be managed by a program coordinator who will be tasked with overseeing a year-round calendar of activities for families and children living in Chester. Additional community resource specialists

will also be hired, who will actively work to identify and support program participants. In addition, a case manager will assist the community resource specialists in evaluating and accessing the services needed by program participants.

Recognizing that quality of life issues have an impact on levels of crime, the District Attorney also requested funding to clean up some of the illegal dumpsites in the City. Sites that are cleaned up through this funding will be equipped with cameras that will be monitored by the Chester Police Department, and violators will be prosecuted by the District Attorney's office. Finally, funding was also awarded to support the presence of additional officers on the streets.

In the Fall of 2020 the District Attorney launched the Chester Partnership for Safe Neighborhoods (CPSN), a deterrence-based program aimed at reducing gun violence premised on a data-driven model developed by Swarthmore College alum David Kennedy. The program, similar to ones implemented years ago in Boston and Philadelphia, works on a "carrot and stick" approach that begins by calling in influential people involved in crime, explaining that law enforcement knows who they are what they are responsible for, and giving them the ultimatum: "If you let us, we will help you; if you make us, we will stop you."

The help may come in ways big and small, from simply getting a suspended license reinstated, or a present for someone's daughter while they are in prison, to getting an offender into an educational or vocational program so they can improve their lot in life legally. With the support of County Council, a community resource specialist was hired in 2020, and he works on the streets of Chester every day connecting at-risk individuals with needed services.

In addition to an emphasis on community outreach, the program relies on enhanced intelligence gathering by law enforcement, as well as the sharing of such intelligence on a continuous basis. To that end, the detectives and attorneys in the District Attorney's office hold weekly meetings with the Chester Police Department to ensure that all parties are working with an up-to-date, accurate assessment of conditions on the streets.

CPSN has shown huge dividends since its establishment in October 2020. 2021 saw just 80 shooting incidents compared to 122 the year prior, a 34% drop and the lowest number in at least five years, by the partnership's data. Last year also saw the highest "clearance" rate – or arrests made – in homicide cases in at least two decades, at 57%. According to Deputy District Attorney Matt Krouse, who is responsible for running CPSN, 2021 saw a 38% decrease in overall homicides and 44% decrease in gun violence homicides. Homicides in the city dipped from 34 in 2020 to 21 in 2021.

"As has been stated many times in the last two years, the residents of the City of Chester are enormously grateful to the District Attorney and his excellent team for everything that they have done to reduce gun violence in the City. We are excited about the opportunities created by this funding to continue and expand our collaboration, and we remain thoroughly committed to this effort to improve the lives of City residents, particularly our families and our children," said Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland.

“This is a game-changing award, and I am thrilled for the City of Chester that the state has recognized the good work that has been happening here, and that they have decided to make an investment in Chester’s future,” said State Senator John Kane. “This program is exactly the kind of initiative that the state wants to support – it has a proven record of success, and we expect that this funding will allow it to continue to grow.”

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