



[Home](#) / [Council Documents](#)

934-2022

Communication

Request of Michelle Stevenson to address Council regarding gun violence reduction ideas

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A brief description of Communication: Gun Violence Reduction Ideas

Agenda Items

934 Communications in [November 9, 2022 Council Agenda](#)

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Requested Agenda Type

Communications

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date
November 9, 2022

From: [Michelle Stevenson](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [Howard, Stephanie](#); [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#)
Subject: Item 934 November 9 Testimony From Stevenson with Links
Date: Wednesday, November 9, 2022 9:53:27 AM

Hello. My name is Michelle Stevenson, my pronouns are she/her. I'm a community member and speak for myself.

I am here to argue against the implementation of Shotspotter in the city of Portland. I think gun violence is a very serious problem, and it is something I've been exposed to both living in Portland and abroad. I've been shot at, I've been threatened. When I lived in Guatemala I worked at a women's shelter where most of the women and children had been victims of gun violence or been witness to serious homicides, often femicide. The shelter I worked at served as a witness protection for some family relations of cartel members. These women were actively testifying to bring cartel members to justice and lived in constant fear because they stood against powerful forces.

My experiential resume is important to note because I want each one of you to understand that I know gun violence is very very serious and real. I stand for gun violence reduction ideas that work.

I believe that a gun buyback program would help reduce gun violence and I fully support a gun buyback program. I support getting guns out of the hands of our youth and vulnerable men and some cash into their hands to give them a chance, a boost up, so that they can get out of dangerous situations that they might be in. \$1000 would mean the world to some of these young folks, it could change their entire trajectory for the better. Instead of getting locked into a cycle of violence and revenge they could escape and start new, minus only their guns, the tool that often traps them in unhealthy cycles.

I have read a great deal on Shotspotter. I am worried about civil rights infringements from using Shotspotter and without a full data release from Shotspotter, I cannot say one way or another if it will work to reduce gun violence.

The data I saw on Doleac's Justice Tech Lab page, which was copiously quoted by Shotspotter salespeople, was a public records release from the city governments. It included time and triangulation of Shotspotter 911 calls of sounds believed to be gunshots. There was absolutely no data on outcome. All I know from Doleac's data is that 911 was called by Shotspotter x amount of times. Doleac's claim that Shotspotter works is not upheld by the data she was working off of, and therefore cannot be taken seriously.

In one of the meetings with FITCOG Stephanie Howard mentioned that she was studying Oakland's Shotspotter program as a similar city with purported positive outcomes from Shotspotter implementation. As an aside, I dispute that the downtick in violence in Oakland in the time frame mentioned had to do with Shotspotter. I believe it had to do with gentrification and flux in population and housing stability. But I did go and research Oakland as a result. I'm sending a copy of this speech to cctestimony with a link to the article referencing this, but Brian Hofer, of the Oakland Privacy Commission stated that in their Shotspotter contract, Shotspotter owns the data. This appears to be consistent across contracts in different cities. I wonder if the real serious money for Shotspotter comes from the data gathered from microphones placed in public areas. It isn't clear what they do with the gathered data. Who can listen to it within Shotspotter? Do they aggregate and sell the data to companies, to different countries? Shotspotter, in response to civil rights queries, doesn't release some data of their recording to the police, but that doesn't mean they don't sell the data to third parties. They would own that data, they would have the legal right, unless the contract states otherwise in a legally airtight way. This is not unlike Facebook making big money in selling data, (Facebook often sells for direct marketing, based on my review of Shotspotter's privacy statements I believe they're most likely to sell to mass marketers) and I have to say, I'm not okay with my city government selling data about my neighbors and I to a company who then might sell it to God knows who. Handing ownership of neighborhood data is not a safe or smart contract for the

city of Portland to sign.

Thank you very much for your time.

<http://justicetechlab.org/shotspotter-data/>

<https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/oakland-ca-to-reconsider-totally-unproven-shotspotter-tech/594718/>

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-geography-incidence-and-underreporting-of-gun-violence-new-evidence-using-shotspotter-data/>