

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **COUNCIL PRESIDENT WANTS ADVANCED CRIME FIGHTING TOOL IMPLEMENTED**

#### ***Says Sophisticated Technology Will Help Reduce Crime***

Pittsburgh...Monday, October 5, 2009, City Council President Doug Shields will introduce legislation tomorrow authorizing the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to implement innovative technology that will help reduce gun violence in Pittsburgh. Shields initially learned about the system in conversations with Councilor Rob Consalvo, the prime mover in bringing the technology to Boston.

“With the availability of sophisticated acoustic gunshot detection systems that have demonstrated effectiveness time and time again, it would be irresponsible not to aggressively pursue this off-the-shelf crime fighting tool,” said Shields.

Gunshot detection systems work by recognizing and locating gun shots via a network of microphone type-sensors. When the sound of gunfire is detected, the 911 emergency system is *automatically* alerted with positioning information. Dispatchers, then, notify police within seconds and direct them to the exact location where an incident has taken place.

Since this technology offers real-time and location identification of gunfire, it allows for faster police and emergency medical service response time, thus increasing potential for the arrest of a suspect. It also: allows for a police response even if no one calls 911 to report gunfire; enhances the accuracy of forensics; and distinguishes between gunfire and other non-lethal similar sounds.

Shields said there are countless examples of how valuable this type of system can be. For example, Charleston, S.C. cut its violent crime rate in a neighborhood by one-third after installing the system. The equipment was so sensitive that police were able to prove that in one drive-by shooting case, two people were responsible, 11 shots were fired, and shots six through eight were fired from the passenger side.

Among the dozens of American cities currently using this technology are: Boston, Massachusetts; Los Angeles, California; Gary, Indiana; Charleston, South Carolina; Washington, D.C.; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Montgomery, Alabama; and Richmond, Virginia. It is also in place at federal agencies, including: Homeland Security; Federal Bureau of Investigation; the United States Attorney’s Office; the military; and the Department of Justice.

“It is way past time for us to proactively target gun crime,” said Shields. “Funds are available and there is no good reason for the people of Pittsburgh not to benefit as quickly as possible from this relatively inexpensive crime fighting tool.”

"CeaseFirePA applauds the efforts of Council President Doug Shields to employ cutting edge gunshot detection technology to help Pittsburgh police crack down on gun violence and illegal handguns in our community," said Jana Finder, Western PA coordinator of CeaseFirePA.

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