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**DEMOCRATIC MAYORAL NOMINEE CHERELLE PARKER WANTS TO STRENGTHEN POLICE, LEAN ON STOPS AND SEARCHES TO TACKLE GUN VIOLENCE**



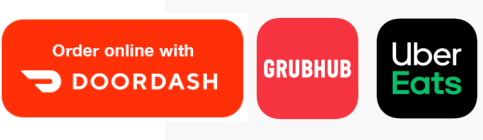
(Kimberly Paynter/WHYY)



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# PA. SENATE DEMOCRATS, LT. GOV. DAVIS CALL FOR VOTE ON GUN CONTROL BILLS



(Capital-Star photo by Marley Parish)

By Marely Parish  
Pennsylvania Capital Star

After two bills aimed at pre-

venting gun violence saw approval in the House of Representatives last month, Senate Democrats want to

finish the job started by their colleagues, who hold a razor-thin margin in the lower chamber, and send the measures to Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro's desk. As the General Assembly returned to session on Monday — and kicking off gun violence prevention month — Lt. Gov. Austin Davis and Senate Democrats called on their Republican colleagues to support and act on House Bill 1018, which temporarily prevents people in crisis from purchasing firearms, and House Bill 714, which expands background checks on firearms buyers and ends an exception for private sales of long guns.

"Gun violence is a uniquely Pennsylvania problem. It's not a Pittsburgh problem. It's not a Philadelphia problem," Davis, a Democrat, said. "It's a Pennsylvania problem, and we can solve this problem by working together."

The House narrowly approved the bills in May, sending them to the Senate.

"We are just one step away from getting these measures on Gov. Shapiro's desk, and we know he will sign them," Senate Minority Leader Jay Costa, D-Allegheny, said during a press conference. "And that's what we're asking for, the opportunity to be heard. We're speaking on behalf of the tens of thousands of people who have been affected by gun violence here."

Before seeing a chamber vote, the bills must advance out of a committee, likely the Senate Judiciary Committee. Sen. Steven Santariero, R-Bucks, the ranking Democrat on the panel, told reporters he plans to talk to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairperson Lisa Baker, R-Luzerne, about running the bills.

In a statement to the Capital-Star, Baker said the committee will evaluate and discuss the two pieces of legislation "in the same manner as other bills."

"It is premature to speculate as to the prospects for consideration," Baker said. "But, as I have frequently said in the past, and will consistently focus on in the future, what I am looking for in potentially considering any gun-related bills is enforceability and ensuring due process in accordance with constitutional protections."



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# DEMOCRATIC MAYORAL NOMINEE CHERELLE PARKER WANTS TO STRENGTHEN POLICE, LEAN ON STOPS AND SEARCHES TO TACKLE GUN VIOLENCE



(Emma Lee/WHYY)

By Sammy Caiola, WHYY

**Cherelle Parker has been more supportive of law enforcement than other Democratic candidates, including considering controversial practices such as stop and frisk.**

At her first public appearance after winning the Democratic nomination for Philadelphia's next mayor, Cherelle Parker clarified her stance on the controversial policing practice

stop and frisk.

"There is no place for unconstitutional stop and frisk," she said. "Terry stops are what I wholeheartedly embrace as a tool that law enforcement needs, to make the public safety of our city their number one priority. It is a legal tool." The phrase "Terry stop" refers to a 1968 court case called Terry vs. Ohio. As written, police officers can stop people they reasonably suspect have committed, are committing, or are about to

commit a crime, and they can search someone if they believe the person is armed and dangerous.

But in Philadelphia the practice has been disproportionately used to stop Black men, often without legal justification, leaving many to wonder what the future of public safety will look like should Parker win the mayoral seat in November.

In 2010 the ACLU of Pennsylvania sued the city over

concerns about discrimination. In 2013 a judge in New York City ruled it unconstitutional there, calling it a form of racial profiling. Parker said she's aware of the potential for harm.

"Particularly for Black people like me, and a mother of a 10-year old Black boy," she said. "I've seen what it's like, particularly when I've had Black men who I've loved and cared about stopped for no apparent reason other than the fact that they were Black."

She said if she's elected mayor, she'll require more training and accountability measures so officers won't continue that pattern.

"Under no circumstances will that kind of behavior be allowed."

approach when they actually witness suspicious criminal behavior," said University of Pennsylvania criminologist John MacDonald. "A lot of the controversy comes around what is reasonable suspicion ... If there's pressure to do more [stops and frisks], do the police then just decide to become less discerning in what that is?"

Longtime gun violence activist Reuben Jones, executive director of Frontline Dads, said that's exactly what would happen if the next mayor encourages the practice.

"It's going to target Black men, it's going to cost the city lawsuits, it's going to generate a lot of distrust towards the police," he said.

**'We have to find a balance'**

In 2020 Parker, then a council member, introduced a change to the city charter that banned unconstitutional use of stop and frisk. The language mirrored federal law and existing Philadelphia Police Department policy.

Legal experts say it all comes down to how a mayor and police commissioner implement the practice.

"The idea should be that the police are being vigilant, but are only using this as an

He believes Parker was responding to calls from Philadelphians who feel unsafe due to the ongoing gun violence crisis, but that they may not fully understand the consequences of treating the practice as a tool for prevention.

"Philadelphians were crying out for help ... people made a choice and the choice wasn't 'okay, we're going to sacrifice our civil liberties in exchange for public safety,'" he said. "That wasn't a choice that was made."

Republican mayoral candi-



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date David Oh said it's not possible to have officers stop and search people based on suspicion without it being a violation of their rights.

"I don't think there is any way that I could tell a police force to use constitutional stop and frisk in protecting the public," he said. "If you do suspect they have a firearm, for example, they may have a legal firearm. They may have a permit to carry."

He said if elected mayor, he would instead focus on improving police response times to 911 calls and addressing the officer shortage.

Philadelphia Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw addressed the issue at a press conference the day before the May 16 primary election.

"The law is there, it's never gone away," she said.

"What we're talking about are policies of the past where we cast these wide nets. We all know that's not the best thing to do, but yet we have to find a balance." Inspector Fran Healy, special advisor to the police commissioner, said in an interview with WHYY News that "stop and frisk" is a misnomer, and that the department only performs legally legitimate Terry stops.

"It needs to be done correctly, and with oversight, and that's really what we have here in Philadelphia" he said.

He worries that when people hear the words "stop and frisk," they have a "knee-jerk reaction" that the department will return to the more robust enforcement of the 1980s and 1990s.

"We're not going back there," he said. "We may change tactics, we'll be directed, whatever the next mayor says to do. But it will be done with constitutionality with the community in mind."

The way police officers treat people in the neighborhoods they're patrolling can go a long way toward preventing gun violence if they can establish trust, said Tyrique Glasgow, a Grays

Ferry youth mentor. He said the next mayoral candidate should encourage law enforcement officers to be of service to communities.

"We're not gonna point the finger at Parker but we want her to acknowledge what she's stepping into," he said. "That it's her responsibility to constantly have resources and eyeballs on the lack of systematic investment in our communities."

### **The history, and the findings**

The last mayor to endorse stop and frisk was Michael Nutter, who increased the number of patrol officers in high-violence areas while he held the office from 2008 to 2016. He felt having officers stop more people and search them for firearms would be an effective way to reduce the number of

But racial bias has persisted — nearly 70% of vehicular and pedestrian stops have been of Black Philadelphians since that tracking began, though this group makes up just 40% of the city's population, according to a WHYY News' analysis of the database. The data also shows officers are more likely to stop and search Black Philadelphians without justification than any other racial group.

Activists say stops of Black males too often escalate into fatal encounters — police use of force is the sixth-leading cause of death for young men of color nationwide, according to a 2020 study from the University of Michigan, Rutgers, and Washington University. And even in less severe situations, stops and frisks can create significant

were recovered in 5% of stops and 8% of frisks, according to ACLU research. MacDonald, at the University of Pennsylvania, said that trend is due to a combination of police departments cutting down on searches and an increase in the number of guns on the street.

"That's a frightening number in terms of rate," he said. "Usually we don't see numbers anywhere near that."

His study of the New York Police Department's Operation Impact found that deploying more police to high-crime areas in New York led to a 12% to 15% decline in crime, but the additional use of stop and frisk made little difference.

The study also found that 80% of the stops were not productive, as in they did not stop a crime or lead to an arrest.

"I wouldn't say it's productive if just as a consequence of doing a routine stop, they find a firearm," said MacDonald, of the University of Pennsylvania. "It should be closely linked to behavior."

### **From defund to community policing**

Three years ago, hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians were on the streets protesting the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Some residents were also calling on the city to defund the police at that time — and to shift dollars away from law enforcement and toward social services. The PPD budget has been growing steadily since 2013, according to a 2020 analysis from the Office of the Controller. The proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 includes \$782 million for the police department, compared with \$729 million in the approved budget for fiscal year 2022.

Cherelle Parker believes police must be adequately funded to keep the city safe. She said the week after winning the primary that her focus will be on "restoring our police department to its full complement."

"And that means using every tool that we can to make sure we get officers on the

job in addition to making sure that we have those 300 foot patrol and bike officers that you heard me talk about so much," she said, adding that community policing will be "an essential part" of her campaign.

Philadelphia police leaders have been touting Operation Pinpoint, which puts a similar emphasis on getting uniformed officers out to "hotspot" neighborhoods, with recent declines in violent crime.

In Grays Ferry, Tyrique Glasgow said there is a consistent team of police officers in the neighborhood, and they provide resources and free activities to residents while also responding to crime. Fatal and nonfatal shootings in his neighborhood fell from a total of 66 in 2020 to a total of 34 in 2022, according to police data.

He feels restoring trust in law enforcement has been part of the solution.

"How do we grow with a police department that has abused us?" he said. "This relationship needs closure. We need to move forward therapeutically."

Activists emphasize that the new administration also has a responsibility to invest in neighborhoods struggling with violence following decades of neglect due to historic redlining. On Monday, Parker vowed to confront all of it.

"Neighborhood blight, struggling schools, and quite frankly, a lack of economic opportunity," she said. "Now, with our win, to me these communities are now closest to the power ... we can close the gap between the haves and have nots ... we can literally restore hope and pride back to our city again."



murders, which had been on the rise before he took office.

In 2010, the ACLU of Pennsylvania filed a lawsuit against Philadelphia on behalf of Black and Latino men who felt they were unfairly stopped. As part of the Bailey v. City of Philadelphia settlement officers have been required to document all pedestrian and vehicle stops and searches in an electronic database since 2014.

In 2020, activists publicly called on Mayor Jim Kenney to end stop and frisk. Kenney said he'd eliminate the practice, and searches did consistently decline during his term.

stress and discomfort for those who are subjected to them.

"Stop and frisk has been known to be biased, deadly at times, and harmful to our community, to people who look like me," said Philadelphia activist Asa Khalif, who led demonstrations against police violence in 2020. "It's irresponsible for any politician to try to put that narrative out again, that we need this."

During the second half of 2019 nearly 99% of frisks yielded no weapons, according to an ACLU analysis. That seizure rate is improving though. In the first quarter of 2022, guns



# HOUSE GOP SAYS DEMOCRATS SABOTAGED SHAPIRO BUDGET TO SPEND MORE

By Todd Shepherd  
Broad + Liberty

House Republicans on Monday blasted their Democratic counterparts as willing to betray their own governor by passing an “unsustainable” and “bloated” budget that goes well beyond what Governor Josh Shapiro was ready to spend. “House Democrats today completely broke with their governor, Josh Shapiro, by gutting his budget and replacing it with a bloated spending plan that reflects their unilateral priorities,” House Republican Leader Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) said.

“While Gov. Shapiro’s budget was bad enough, Democrats today have increased spending and raised taxes, bloated state government, and rammed through

a massive and unsustainable spending plan with only six hours for lawmakers and the public to read it,” Cutler added. “This is not only gross mismanagement and a lack of transparency by House Democrats, but it is the kind of sneak attack politics that the public abhors.” Presented with those accusations, Gov. Shapiro’s office gave a somewhat oblique response.

“Governor Shapiro commends the new House Democratic majority for taking this important step forward and adding to our shared priorities as we work to pass a commonsense budget,” said Shapiro press secretary Manuel Bonder. “Now, as this process moves on to the Senate, we look forward to continuing to work with Republicans and Democrats alike to bring people together and deliver a budget that

addresses the most pressing issues facing our Commonwealth.”

The GOP press release alleges House Democrats, who enjoy the majority for the first time since the 2010 session, tacked on another \$1.08 billion to \$45.9 billion budget introduced by Gov. Shapiro.

They also say that if the House Democrats’ budget were to pass, it would be “a \$5.7 billion increase” over the current fiscal year, an increase of fourteen percent. To put that proposed spending increase in perspective, the legislature would need to approve a more than 30 percent increase in the personal income tax to cover House Democrats’ proposed new spending.

Just as the budget battle began to unfold Monday afternoon, the Associated Press published a sto-

ry saying the budget would be one of the first serious tests of “whether Gov. Josh Shapiro can manage a politically divided Legislature in his freshman year.”

“It could also set the tone for how the Democratic governor will advance his agenda while balancing the demands of an entrenched Senate Republican majority with those of a one-vote House Democratic majority that took power just this year,” the story noted. By state law, the budget must be finalized by June 30.

A request to the House Democratic caucus was not returned or was not successful.

Republicans have controlled the state senate since 1994 and currently hold a 28–22 majority there, which means

that any budget must come about through compromise among both parties’ leaders in the legislature. As in the federal system, all appropriations bills must begin in the House, but the Senate may offer amendments. As governor, Shapiro must balance between doing his own party’s wishes in the House and keeping up good relations with the Senate, which is still in the process of approving his cabinet nominees.

*Todd Shepherd is Broad + Liberty’s chief investigative reporter. Send him tips at [tshepherd@broadandliberty.com](mailto:tshepherd@broadandliberty.com), or use his encrypted email at [shepherdreports@protonmail.com](mailto:shepherdreports@protonmail.com). @shepherdreports*

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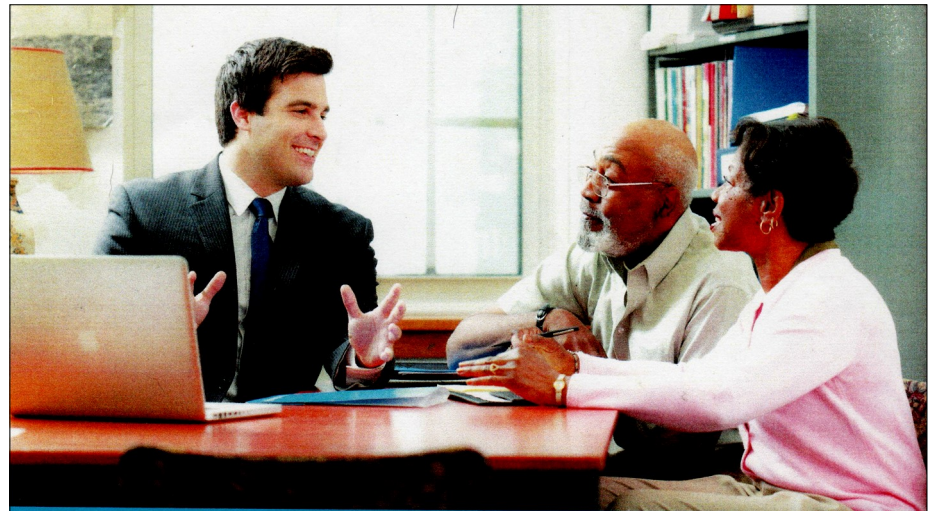
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