

Organized Crime Groups in Florida

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**The Florida House of Representatives
Marco Rubio, Speaker**

I. INTRODUCTION

Gang activity has been increasing in all parts of the state. In some areas, criminal gang activity has reached epidemic proportions. Not only are gangs increasingly using technology to recruit new members, facilitate criminal activity and avoid detection by law enforcement, but some are also transforming into more organized criminal operations. This report includes an analysis of criminal gang activity in the state and nationally, examining the prevalence and sophistication of criminal gangs, the societal impact of these criminal organizations and the challenges modern criminal gangs pose to law enforcement, prosecutors and the communities they terrorize.

II. GANGS IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

*"[G]angs are no longer limited to big cities like New York or Los Angeles – they have spread throughout communities nationwide. And they are not limited to petty crime – they are linked to drug trafficking, organized crime, and violent crime... [Gangs are growing] more technologically proficient, more difficult to identify, and more violent."*¹

Criminal gangs are present in all 50 states and are the primary retail distributors of drugs in the country.² The impact of gangs is notably worse in the more densely populated areas – those with populations of 50,000 or more.³ According to the U.S. Department of Justice, 100% of municipalities with a population greater than or equal to 250,000 reported gang activity in 2001.⁴

While reports indicate that there has been an overall drop in the number of active gang members nationally, municipalities with a population over 25,000 experienced an increase in the number of active gang members.⁵ This statistic indicates that the problem of gangs, which historically was limited to metropolises, has been spreading to cities and towns, affecting public safety, community image, and quality of life in communities of all sizes in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

About 30,000 violent street gangs, motorcycle gangs, and prison gangs, with approximately 800,000 members operate in the United States today.⁶ Many are

¹ Stated by Robert S. Mueller, III, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in Miami, Florida while addressing the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Mueller, III, Robert S. "Major Executive Speeches." Federal Bureau of Investigation. 26 Sept. 2005. 09 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/speeches/mueller092605.htm>>.

² National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, National Gang Threat Assessment (2005).

³ Howell, James C. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. The Impact of Gangs on Communities. 2006.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Egley, Jr., Arlen. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. National Youth Gang Survey Trends From 1996 to 2000.

⁶ "Violent Gangs." Federal Bureau of Investigation. 9 Oct. 2007 <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/ngic/violent_gangs.htm>.

sophisticated and well organized, and all use violence to control neighborhoods and boost their illegal money-making activities.

III. FLORIDA'S CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY

*"We are the state with the most growth in gang violence over the last 25 years."*⁷

Hundreds of local criminal gangs have been identified in every city from Pensacola to the Florida Keys. This includes Florida's small rural towns, upper middle-class neighborhoods, schools, and other areas.

In 1992, the Florida Department of Corrections ("DOC") began an effort to identify the levels of gang activity within its inmate/offender population. Resulting from DOC's analysis and in cooperation with law enforcement agencies throughout the state, a list of gangs and the cities they operate in has been recorded.⁸ DOC's "Gang Data Bank" has also become an important intelligence resource for Florida's law enforcement.⁹

In 2007, a statewide crime database identified 1,043 known gangs and 64,795 gang members and associates in Florida.¹⁰ These statistics indicate that this figure has significantly increased since 1995 when a state-wide assessment reported that 304 gangs with approximately 10,136 members were active in the state.^{11 12}

Also, the line between prison and street gangs is becoming unclear as gang members flow in and out of the correctional system.¹³ DOC estimates that there are currently 4,750 incarcerated gang members in Florida's correctional facilities. Prison gangs pose a unique threat to law enforcement, correctional facilities and communities. Mistakenly, many believe that when a gang member is incarcerated their threat disappears. The reality is incarceration of gang members often does little to disrupt their activities, and can often aid in the recruitment of other members and the spread of their criminal enterprise.¹⁴ Also, high-ranking gang members are often able to exert their influence on the street from within prison.¹⁵

⁷ According to Florida's Attorney General, Bill McCollum. Goodman, Howard. "State Needs a Strategy to Combat Rising Gang Violence." Sun-Sentinel 29 Mar. 2007, Palm Beach ed., sec. B: 1.

⁸ See Appendix B.

⁹ Florida's Office of the Attorney General, Gangs in Florida – Understanding the Problem. 2007.

¹⁰ Goodman, Howard. "State Needs a Strategy to Combat Rising Gang Violence." Sun-Sentinel 29 Mar. 2007, Palm Beach ed., sec. B: 1.

¹¹ "Gangs in Florida." Gang and Security Threat Group Awareness. Florida Department of Corrections. 9 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/gangs/fl.html>>.

¹² Note: Due to a lack of standardized methods for data collection on gang members and gang activity the actual number of gang members in Florida remains imprecise.

¹³ Decker, S.H. From the Streets to the Prison: Understanding and Responding to Gangs. Indianapolis: National Major Gang Task Force, 2001.

¹⁴ National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, National Gang Threat Assessment (2005).

¹⁵ Id.

Numerous criminal gangs identified as operating in Florida are affiliated with national criminal organizations.¹⁶ Large national criminal gangs pose a serious threat because they smuggle, produce, transport and distribute large quantities of illicit drugs and are extremely violent.

The main source of income for these national criminal gangs is street-level distribution of cocaine, crack cocaine, hashish, heroin, LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, also known as ecstasy), marijuana, methamphetamine, PCP (phencyclidine) and diverted pharmaceuticals.¹⁷

These national criminal gangs are also involved in other criminal activity including alien smuggling, arson, assault, auto theft, burglary, carjacking, drive-by shooting, explosives operations, extortion, fraud, home invasion, homicide, identification fraud, intimidation, kidnapping, money laundering, prostitution operations, robbery, and weapons trafficking.¹⁸

Crimes attributed to gangs in Florida have increased by 61 percent during the past three years, from 2,759 in the 2004-05 fiscal year to 4,447 in 2006-07.¹⁹

III. CRIMINAL GANG MEMBERSHIP

Gangs differ in size, longevity, level of organization, demographic characteristics, favored criminal behavior, etc. There is no "typical" criminal gang. Some are comprised of just three or four individuals whose sole ambition is to control drug sales on their street corner. Others have multifaceted hierarchies and utilize modern technology. One gang may be robbing a bank for extra spending money, while five blocks away, another gang may be committing murder for a criminal enterprise being run out of a prison.²⁰

Full-fledged gang membership is often a gradual, social process; there are distinctions in the level to which individuals are affiliated with, or involved in, criminal gangs. Increasing levels of gang affiliation are positively related to increasing levels of criminal behavior.²¹

Section 874.03, F.S., provides definitions of "criminal street gang", "criminal street gang member", "pattern of criminal street gang activity" and "criminal street gang associate".

¹⁶ National Drug Intelligence Center. U.S. Department of Justice. Gangs in the United States, Johnstown, PA. 4 Oct. 2005.

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ Id.

¹⁹ "Attorney General Forms Panel on Gangs." The Associated Press 26 Oct. 2007. 9 Nov. 2007 <<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2007/oct/26/me-attorney-general-forms-panel-on-gangs/?news-breaking>>.

²⁰ Mueller, III, Robert S. "Major Executive Speeches." Federal Bureau of Investigation. 18 Jan. 2007. U.S. Department of Justice. 23 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/speeches/mueller011807.htm>>.

²¹ McGloin, Jean M. Street Gangs and Interventions: Innovative Problem Solving with Network Analysis. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington D.C.: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2005.

(1) "**Criminal street gang**" means a formal or informal ongoing organization, association, or group that has as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal or delinquent acts, and that consists of three or more persons who have a common name or common identifying signs, colors, or symbols and have two or more members who, individually or collectively, engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal street gang activity.

(2) "**Criminal street gang member**" is a person who is a member of a criminal street gang as defined in subsection (1) and who meets two or more of the following criteria:

(a) Admits to criminal street gang membership.

(b) Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a parent or guardian.

(c) Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a documented reliable informant.

(d) Resides in or frequents a particular criminal street gang's area and adopts their style of dress, their use of hand signs, or their tattoos, and associates with known criminal street gang members.

(e) Is identified as a criminal street gang member by an informant of previously untested reliability and such identification is corroborated by independent information.

(f) Has been arrested more than once in the company of identified criminal street gang members for offenses which are consistent with usual criminal street gang activity.

(g) Is identified as a criminal street gang member by physical evidence such as photographs or other documentation.

(h) Has been stopped in the company of known criminal street gang members four or more times.

(3) "**Pattern of criminal street gang activity**" means the commission or attempted commission of, or solicitation or conspiracy to commit, two or more felony or three or more misdemeanor offenses, or one felony and two misdemeanor offenses, or the comparable number of delinquent acts or violations of law which would be felonies or misdemeanors if committed by an adult, on separate occasions within a 3-year period.

(4) For purposes of law enforcement identification and tracking only:

(a) "**Criminal street gang associate**" means a person who:

1. Admits to criminal street gang association; or

2. Meets any single defining criterion for criminal street gang membership described in subsection (2).

IV. SOPHISTICATION OF CRIMINAL GANGS

"[C]riminal street gangs are utilizing technology in the furtherance of their criminal activities."²²

Gangs vary by levels of criminal sophistication. Although, the majority of criminal gangs are loose, relatively unstructured associations, some gangs have become entrepreneurial organizations, forming into formal national criminal organizations.²³ Gangs operating as organized criminal groups have a devastating community impact.

One such group, the Black Gangsters Disciples Nation (identified by DOC as operating in Florida²⁴), is reputed to manage an extensive drug operation, and has a corporate hierarchy, consisting of a chairman of the board, two board of directors (one for prisons, another for the streets), governors (who control drug trafficking within geographical areas), regents (who supply the drugs and oversee several drug-selling locations within the governors' realm), area coordinators (who collect revenues from drug-selling spots), enforcers (who beat or kill members who cheat the gang or disobey other rules), and "shorties" (juveniles who staff drug-selling spots and execute drug deals).²⁵

Criminal gangs are also increasingly using technology to coordinate activities, recruit new members, and commit crimes.²⁶ Gangs use technology in the form of computers, the Internet, and cellular phones, and are expanding their capabilities as new technology becomes available and affordable. Technology enables criminal gang members to work faster and more efficiently, which poses novel challenges for law enforcement. But as criminal gangs use technology more and in new ways, it also provides law enforcement with new sources of investigative leads and evidence.

The most commonly reported technology used by gang members are cell phones with "walkie-talkie" or "push-to-talk" functions. Gangs use this technology because they believe that their communication is untraceable or not subject to wiretaps.²⁷ This technology allows gang members to communicate with one another instantly, which can be used to more effectively conduct their operations, such as notifying gang members of the presence of law enforcement.

The use of computers and the Internet by criminal gangs is also on the rise. Law enforcement has reported the use of personal computers, laptops and personal digital

²² 2007 Statewide Gang Survey Results. Office of Statewide Intelligence. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2007.

²³ Howell, James C. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. The Impact of Gangs on Communities. 2006.

²⁴ "Gangs in Florida." Gang and Security Threat Group Awareness. Florida Department of Corrections. 9 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/gangs/fl.html>>.

²⁵ McCormick, J. "The 'Disciples' of Drugs and Death." Newsweek 5 Feb. 1996: 56-57.

²⁶ National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, National Gang Threat Assessment (2005).

²⁷ Id.

assistants by criminal gangs in producing fraudulent checks and counterfeit currency, and in developing and maintaining databases of gang and drug activities. Gangs are also now using the Internet to track court proceedings and to identify witnesses.²⁸

The Internet is being used by criminal gangs as a source of profit, coordination and solicitation. Internet prostitution and the pirating of movies and music via the Internet have both proven to be lucrative enterprises for criminal gangs.²⁹ Gangs have also been found to be using the Internet to commit personal identity theft. Additionally, gangs are using websites, chat rooms, message boards and blogs to coordinate meetings and to disseminate other information.

Association with Organized Crime and Terrorist Organizations

*"Gangs are associating with organized crime entities, such as Mexican drug operations, Asian criminal groups, and Russian organized crime groups."*³⁰

*"American inmates are ripe for the picking by an intelligent terrorist bent on recruiting for his/her terrorist organization."*³¹

Organized crime groups often turn to gangs to conduct low-level criminal activities, protect territories, and facilitate drug-trafficking activities. Financial gain is the primary goal of any association between these groups.³²

It is "highly probable" that several U.S. based gangs will increase their relationship with international criminal organizations and drug trafficking organizations, according to the National Drug Intelligence Center.³³

Since the 1990's, law enforcement agencies have documented the increasing reliance by terrorist organizations on criminal activity as a source of revenue.³⁴ Since September 11, 2001, nations have been working to identify individuals and organizations funding terrorists. Due to diminishing sources of funding because of increasing international scrutiny, more "traditional" criminal activities like drug trafficking, robbery, extortion, kidnapping and smuggling have emerged as alternative sources of revenue to terrorist organizations.³⁵ To facilitate their operational objectives, established drug, arms and human trafficking, as well as money laundering channels may provide an impetus for

²⁸ Id.

²⁹ Id.

³⁰ According to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment, conducted by the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations, in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Drug Intelligence Center, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Id.

³¹ Savelli, Lou. "Gangs and Terrorists Together in the Streets of America!" Gangs Across America. 16 Jan. 2008 <http://www.gangscrossamerica.com/gangs_and_terrorists.php>.

³² National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, National Gang Threat Assessment (2005).

³³ National Drug Intelligence Center. U.S. Department of Justice. Gangs in the United States, Johnstown, PA. 4 Oct. 2005.

³⁴ Wilson, G. I., and John P. Sullivan. On Gangs, Crime, and Terrorism. Special to Defense and the National Interest. 2007.

³⁵ Mili, Hayder. "Tangled Webs: Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups." Terrorism Monitor 12 Jan. 2006: 8-10.

terrorist organizations to develop relationships with already established domestic criminal gangs.

Terrorist organizations have already relied upon criminal street gangs for logistical and operational support for individual terrorists and terrorist acts against the United States.³⁶ Gangs such as the Mexican Boys, 18th Street, and Vatos Locos have sold fraudulent identification documents to terrorists.³⁷ Terrorists have also approached criminal street gangs to perpetrate violent attacks on American interests. In 1986, members of the Chicago street gang called the Black P Stones converted to Islam, calling themselves El Rukns, and planned to purchase anti-aircraft missiles and fire the missiles at passing airliners in exchange for money from Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, the chief of state of Lybia.³⁸

There is an ongoing debate in the law enforcement community as to the extent of the cooperation between U.S. based criminal gangs and terrorist organizations. While there are few reliable indications of such cooperation, there are *numerous* indications that incarcerated criminal gang members are increasingly vulnerable to recruitment by terrorists.

For example, Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen, recently convicted by a federal jury in the Southern District of Florida of conspiracy to murder, kidnap and maim individuals in a foreign country, conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, and providing material support to terrorists, was a former member of the Maniac Latin Disciples street gang.^{39 40} During his gang years, Mr. Padilla was arrested many times. While in prison in Florida, Mr. Padilla was approached and befriended by Islamic inmates. After serving his last jail sentence, Mr. Padilla converted to Islam. CNN reports that Padilla attended Masjid Al-Iman mosque in Fort Lauderdale, Florida “for most of the 1990s.”⁴¹ This mosque has been tied to terrorism. Eventually, Mr. Padilla traveled overseas, conspired with Al Qaeda and received violent jihad training, including the possibility of using a “dirty bomb” in the U.S. Mr. Padilla is scheduled to be sentenced under a “terrorism enhancement” provision for aiding terrorists in January 2008.

V. SOCIETAL COSTS CAUSED BY CRIMINAL GANGS

Community residents’ fear of gangs and of becoming victims of gang crime is apparent in the most gang-infested communities. Where gangs are more prevalent and dangerous, in

³⁶ Savelli, Lou. "Gangs and Terrorists Together in the Streets of America!" Gangs Across America. 16 Jan. 2008 <http://www.gangscrossamerica.com/gangs_and_terrorists.php>.

³⁷ Id.

³⁸ Id.

³⁹ "José Padilla (Prisoner)." Wikipedia. 9 Oct. 2007 <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Padilla_\(alleged_terrorist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Padilla_(alleged_terrorist))>.

⁴⁰ Savelli, Lou. "Gangs and Terrorists Together in the Streets of America!" Gangs Across America. 16 Jan. 2008 <http://www.gangscrossamerica.com/gangs_and_terrorists.php>.

⁴¹ Candiotti, Susan, and Mark Potter. "Feds Arrest Man Linked to 'Dirty Bomb' Suspect." CNN. 15 June 2002. 9 Oct. 2007 <<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/US/06/15/padilla.associate/>>.

lower-income neighborhoods, fear of crime and criminal gangs is an immediate, daily experience.⁴² Because of the advancement of weaponry and violent tactics employed by criminal gangs, the personal safety of residents is jeopardized to the extent that the risk of being caught in gang cross-fire is increased.⁴³

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Supplementary Homicide Reports, each year between 1993 and 2003, from 5% to 7% of all homicides and from 8% to 10% of homicides committed with a firearm were gang related.⁴⁴

While the proportion of all crimes attributable to gangs is unknown, the medical and financial consequences of gang violence are often overlooked. The total volume of crime is estimated to cost Americans \$655 billion each year – of course, gangs are responsible for a substantial proportion of this.⁴⁵ Nationwide, the complete cost of gun violence indicate a value of approximately \$1 million per assault-related gunshot injury.⁴⁶

In a 1998 study, Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University looked at the potential benefits from “saving” a high-risk youth, by estimating the lifetime costs associated with the typical career criminal, drug abuser, and high-school dropout. His study found that a typical career criminal causes \$1.3–\$1.5 million in external costs; a heavy drug user, \$370,000 to \$970,000; and a high-school dropout, \$243,000 to \$388,000. Eliminating duplication between crimes committed by individuals who are both heavy drug users and career criminals results in an overall estimate of the “monetary value of saving a high-risk youth” of \$1.7 to \$2.3 million.⁴⁷

Where they have a substantial presence, youth gangs are linked with serious delinquency problems in elementary and secondary schools in the U.S.⁴⁸ There are strong correlations between gang presence in schools and both guns and the availability of drugs in school.⁴⁹ The presence of gangs more than doubles the likelihood of violent victimization at school.⁵⁰

Statistics alone do not paint the full picture. Barbara Siler's nine-year old son, Stacy Williams, Jr. was shot to death while riding his bike on a Bradenton, Florida street in May 2006.⁵¹ The nine-year old was caught in the middle of gang-related gunfire. There

⁴² Howell, James C. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. The Impact of Gangs on Communities. 2006.

⁴³ Id.

⁴⁴ Harrell, Erika. Bureau of Justice Statistics. U.S. Department of Justice. Violence by Gang Members, 1993-2003. 2005.

⁴⁵ Howell, James C. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. The Impact of Gangs on Communities. 2006.

⁴⁶ Id.

⁴⁷ Cohen, Mark A. "The Monetary Value of Saving a High-Risk Youth." Journal of Quantitative Criminology 14 (1998): 5-33.

⁴⁸ Chandler, K. A., Chapman, C. D., Rand, M. R., and Taylor, B. M. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice. Students Reports of School Crime: 1989 and 1995. 1998.

⁴⁹ Howell, James C. OJJDP. U.S. Department of Justice. The Impact of Gangs on Communities. 2006.

⁵⁰ Id.

⁵¹ "Gangs are Using the Internet." ABC Action News. 11 Oct. 2007. E.W. Scripps Co. 1 Nov. 2007 <http://www.abcactionnews.com/content/segments/investigators/story.aspx?content_id=da89e4e8-92d0-410c-a82a-2a65bf349008>.

was also Tavares Carter Jr., an 8-month-old baby boy, shot and killed in his car-safety seat on New Year's Day in a barrage of at least 37 bullets in Riviera Beach, Florida.⁵² Unfortunately, these are not the only needless deaths of innocent bystanders caught in the crossfire of gang wars in Florida.

VI. COMBATING GANGS: PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, SUPPRESSION AND COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES

"[P]rosecution and punishment alone will not end gangs and the violence they breed."⁵³

Lawmakers, law enforcement and criminal prosecutors have a wide variety of options when addressing criminal gangs – programs which range from prevention, to intervention, to suppression, to comprehensive strategies.

Experts consistently reiterate that while a criminal justice response to gang activity is very important, by itself it is not completely effective -- prevention, intervention and suppression are also necessary for controlling the impact of gangs.^{54 55 56 57 58 59}

A comprehensive strategy to combat criminal gangs will:

- Identify and work to eliminate the factors that cause gang membership;
- Deter, discourage and rehabilitate minor offenders;
- Supervise, arrest, prosecute and incarcerate known gang members.

Prevention Programs

The 2007 Statewide Gang Assessment, published by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), reported that seventy-four percent (74.7%) of law enforcement respondents indicated that prevention programs would be helpful.⁶⁰

⁵² Slater, Stephanie. "Suspect in Mall Shooting Released." Palm Beach Post 5 Jan. 2007, Final ed., sec. A: 1. LexisNexis. Tallahassee. 4 Dec. 2007.

⁵³ "Department of Justice Highlights Efforts to Combat Gang Violence." Federal Bureau of Investigations. 16 Jan. 2007. 9 Oct. 2007 <<http://miami.fbi.gov/dojpressrel/pressrel07/mm20070116.htm>>.

⁵⁴ Bjerregaard, Beth. "Antigang Legislation and Its Potential Impact: the Promises and the Pitfalls." Criminal Justice Policy Review 14 (2003): 171-192.

⁵⁵ National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, National Gang Threat Assessment (2005).

⁵⁶ Greene, Judith, and Kevin Pranis. Gang Wars: the Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies. Justice Policy Institute. Washington, D.C., 2007. 1-104.

⁵⁷ Hunzeker, Donna. "Ganging Up Against Violence. (US Criminal Street Gangs) (the Problems of Poverty)." Streetgangs. 1 Mar. 1993. National Conference of State Legislatures. 7 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.streetgangs.com/topics/1993/050193donna.html>>.

⁵⁸ Wyrick, Ph.d., Phelan. Executive Office for United States Attorneys. U.S. Department of Justice. Gang Prevention: How to Make the "Front End" of Your Anti-Gang Effort Work. Washington, D.C.: United States Attorneys' Bulletin, 2006.

⁵⁹ McGloin, Jean M. Street Gangs and Interventions: Innovative Problem Solving with Network Analysis. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington D.C.: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2005.

Prevention programs aim to diminish the factors that cause gang membership and criminal behavior, while intervention programs help individuals separate from gangs and criminal behavior. The success of prevention and intervention strategies in curtailing gang activity also depends upon law enforcement having the adequate resources to take suppression action against those who nevertheless continue their gang involvement.

Prevention programs have the broadest targets of interest. Prevention programs address the issue of gang membership by focusing on the root causes rather than trying to control already formed gangs. These strategies are typically aimed at groups that pose some risk, or more broadly, at general populations. The overall success of gang prevention, therefore, has two chief concentrations – communities and individuals.

The causes of gang membership are extensive and interrelated and require comprehensive, multifaceted approaches. The identification of factors that place an individual at risk for gang involvement is essential to initiate programs to help control these factors. Without addressing the causes of gang involvement, other individuals will be there to simply replace, or at least supplement, the incarcerated gang member. Policy designed to instigate change at the societal level most commonly implement meaningful employment opportunities, improved education, improved housing conditions and promote economic revitalization in under-privileged communities.

Prevention programs focusing on individuals are based on a balance of attractive alternatives to gangs, effective support systems for young people, and accountability of young people to their parents, schools and communities. For example, a prevention program may focus on elementary school children who reside in gang neighborhoods and teach them the consequences of gang involvement and help them develop positive relations with law enforcement before they show any symptoms of having joined the gang life.

For example, Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) is a gang prevention program found throughout the country, which teaches middle school children the consequences of gang involvement and helps them develop positive relations with law enforcement with the aim of reducing the probability of youth joining a street gang and adopting delinquent behavior. While the G.R.E.A.T. program provided some demonstrable benefits by educating youths on the consequences of gang involvement and developing favorable attitudes toward the police, one study shows the program did not reduce gang membership or future delinquent behavior.⁶¹

Intervention Programs

⁶⁰ 2007 Statewide Gang Survey Results. Office of Statewide Intelligence. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2007.

⁶¹ Esbensen, Finn-Aage. Evaluating G.R.E.A.T.: a School-Based Gang Prevention Program. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, 2004. 1-4.

FDLE's 2007 Statewide Gang Assessment reported that sixty-seven (67.9%) indicated intervention programs would be beneficial.⁶²

Intervention strategies typically address individuals or places that have manifested some problem; that is, the situation has progressed past risk. Such programs attempt to persuade gang members or gang-affiliated youth to abandon their current lifestyle or to reduce gang-related crime. Intervention programs may include such tactics as a gang truce or the use of detached workers to persuade gang members to leave gang life and reintegrate into the community. One intervention program, entitled Caught in the Crossfire⁶³, was implemented in hospital emergency rooms. Beginning with bedside visits to the gang member and extending to release from the hospital, the staff of this program work to identify the needs of the victim (e.g., employment, social services, etc.), to prevent retaliation, and to aid in his or her reintegration into the community. According to an evaluation, hospitalized youth who took part in the project were 70% less likely to be arrested and 60% less likely to evidence criminal involvement than hospitalized youth who did not partake in the program.⁶⁴

Suppression Programs

Suppression efforts are a much needed tool in today's violent gang society. These techniques focus on the outward manifestations of the gang problem. Suppression techniques provide the most benefit when part of a larger, comprehensive program that couples them with social intervention tactics. Suppression remains an enormously popular response to gang activity despite concerns that such tactics might strengthen gang cohesion and increase tension between law enforcement and community members.⁶⁵

Suppression strategies incorporate three major assets: partnerships, intelligence, and laws. All three enforcement strategies are interconnected – providing a formula for combating gang violence. The most successful gang suppression programs are those where local law enforcement agencies are encouraged to coordinate and cooperate with federal, state and other local agencies. Since gangs can easily cross jurisdictions, so must law enforcement.

Many jurisdictions across the nation utilize an accountability process and organizational management tool for police departments called COMPSTAT. Often relying on software tools, COMPSTAT can incorporate crime mapping systems such as Geographic Information Systems to track and anticipate future crime areas allowing law enforcement to address problems by placing “cops on the dots.”

Comprehensive Programs

⁶² 2007 Statewide Gang Survey Results. Office of Statewide Intelligence. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2007.

⁶³ "Caught in the Crossfire." Youth Alive. 23 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.youthalive.org/caught.html>>.

⁶⁴ McGloin, Jean M. Street Gangs and Interventions: Innovative Problem Solving with Network Analysis. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington D.C.: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2005.

⁶⁵ Greene, Judith, and Kevin Pranis. Gang Wars: the Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies. Justice Policy Institute. Washington, D.C., 2007. 1-104.

Collaborative, comprehensive programs include prevention, intervention, and suppression techniques and hinge on the collective work of a variety of agencies, from criminal justice, to social service, to mental health, to faith-based groups. Though they often require intensive resources and time, such programs appear to be the most promising in areas that have an array of problems surrounding a gang problem and fit well within an existing community policing framework. In addition, should a particular gang pose numerous problems, such as intense gang recruitment in schools, drug sales, and gang-related homicides, a variety of techniques and partners are required to best address the issues at hand.

According to FDLE's 2007 Statewide Gang Assessment, "the gang problem is pervasive and undeniable. Furthermore, the criminal justice community is in agreement that the criminal street gang issue is a crime problem in need of a comprehensive solution... a collaborative, coordinated statewide gang strategy can and should be developed. Such a strategy should contain elements that are flexible enough to deal with regional differences as well as the rapidly changing trends of gang crime that vary greatly from one locality to another."⁶⁶

VII. ANTI-GANG LEGISLATION

Gang-related legislation has been enacted in every region of the United States. The following are many initiatives designed to curb criminal gang activity:

- The types of gang-related legislation most frequently encountered pertain to:
 - Enhanced penalties and sentencing for gang activities;
 - Drive-by shootings;
 - Graffiti;
 - Gang activity and forfeiture, and
 - Gang member solicitation and recruitment.

- Other legislative ideas:
 - Public nuisance laws around the United States are increasingly noting gang activity as a factor in determining a nuisance. For example, Indiana has defined real estate/dwellings as "psychologically affected property" if they are the location of criminal gang activity. This factor must be disclosed, by law, in real estate transactions;
 - Enhanced penalties for being a member of a criminal gang with a juvenile;
 - Penalties for witness intimidation;
 - RICO or other laws that effectively deal with situations in which multiple offenders are prosecuted for the same incidence.

⁶⁶ 2007 Statewide Gang Survey Results. Office of Statewide Intelligence. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2007.

- Areas for appropriations to assist local law enforcement and communities include:
 - For prosecuting attorneys to support violent felon, gang, and car theft prosecution;
 - For training prosecutors in the effective use of the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention (STEP) Act in gang prosecutions;
 - To support multi-agency, regional gang task forces and for statewide gang enforcement training programs for law enforcement officers;
 - To address enforcement problems common to small, mid-sized, and fast growing communities so that they can more actively participate in county, regional, and statewide enforcement activities;
 - To support cities that actively enforce civil gang injunctions;
 - To fund county probation programs to alleviate existing probation case loads and to provide intensified supervision for adult offenders on probation;
 - To fund task forces to conduct searches of high-risk probationers to ensure compliance with their conditions of probation;
 - To support the Witness Protection Program;
 - To develop, implement and maintain a secure statewide gang data warehouse system that shall interface with the current state InSite System database to provide a gang information sharing database system available to local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to better target and prosecute gang crime;
 - To purchase Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking equipment to be used for monitoring high-risk gang offenders;
 - To support multi-agency narcotic task forces;
 - To disseminate criminal justice information to the public and administering public safety programs;

APPENDIX A:

NATIONAL CRIMINAL GANGS WITH A FLORIDA PRESENCE

Some prominent national criminal gangs identified as active in Florida include:⁶⁷

1. **18th Street Gang:** A group of loosely associated sets or cliques, each led by an influential member. National membership is estimated to be 30,000 to 50,000, active in 44 cities in 20 states.
2. **Bloods:** An association of structured and unstructured gangs that have adopted a single gang culture. Large, national-level Bloods gangs include Bounty Hunter Bloods and Crenshaw Mafia Gangsters. National membership is estimated to be 5,000 to 20,000, active in 123 cities in 33 states.
3. **Crips:** A collection of structured and unstructured gangs that have adopted a common gang culture. National membership is estimated to be 30,000 to 35,000, active in 221 cities in 41 states.
4. **Gangster Disciples:** Structured like a corporation and is led by a chairman of the board. National membership is estimated to be 25,000 to 50,000, active in 110 cities in 31 states.
5. **Hells Angels Motorcycle Gang:** Poses a criminal threat on six continents, with 230 chapters in the United States and 26 foreign countries. International membership is estimated to be 2,000 to 2,500 members, with more than 92 chapters in 27 states, with over 800 active members.
6. **Latin Counts:** Composed of at least five structured factions. National membership is estimated to be 400 to 600 members and associate members, most active in the Great Lakes region.
7. **Latin Disciples (aka Maniac Latin Disciples and Young Latino Organization):** Composed of at least 10 structured and unstructured factions. National membership is estimated to be 1,500 to 2,000 members and associate members, most active in the Great Lakes region and southwestern regions of the United States.
8. **Latin Kings (aka Almighty Latin King Nation):** A collection of over 160 structured gangs, referred to as chapters. National membership is estimated to be 20,000 to 35,000, active in 158 cities in 31 states.
9. **Mara Salvatrucha (aka MS 13):** Traditionally, the gang consisted of loosely affiliated groups known as cliques; however, law enforcement officials have reported increased coordination of criminal activity. International membership is estimated to

⁶⁷ National Drug Intelligence Center. U.S. Department of Justice. Gangs in the United States, Johnstown, PA. 4 Oct. 2005.

be 30,000 to 50,000 members and associate members world-wide, 8,000 to 10,000 of whom reside in the United States.

- 10. Outlaws (aka American Outlaws Association and Outlaws Nation):** Has more than 1,700 members belonging to 176 chapters in the United States and 12 foreign countries. U.S. law enforcement authorities estimate that Outlaws have more than 86 chapters in 20 states, with over 700 active members.
- 11. Pagan's Motorcycle Club:** This club has been tied to traditional organized crime groups and has an estimated 200 to 250 members among 41 chapters in 11 states.
- 12. Vice Lord Nation:** A collection of structured gangs, led by a national board. National membership is estimated to be 30,000 to 35,000 members, active in 74 cities in 28 states.

APPENDIX B:

SECURITY THREAT GROUPS IN FLORIDA⁶⁸

Security Threat Groups In Florida	
10th Street Thugs	Miami
112 Avenue Boys	Miami
12 Nation Street Gang	Miami
18th Street Gang	Multiple Cities/Counties
205th Street Players	Miami
2-1	Jacksonville
22 Ave. Players	Dade
23rd Street Boys	Ft. Pierce
25 Street Folk	St. Petersburg
299 Street Boys	Miami
29th Street Players	Miami
2nd Street Fellows	Miami
35th Street Players	Miami
39th Ave North Boys	Clearwater
3-D Kings	Sunrise
4 Avenue Players	Leon
56 Ave Players	Miami
6 Street Mob	Broward
69 Folk	Pensacola
773 Boys	Quincy
8 Ball Posse	Sarasota
98 Posse	Ft. Pierce
American Nazi Party	Multiple Cities/Counties
Apopka Boys	Apopka
Asian Bloods	Multiple Cities/Counties
Army of Light	Hendry CI
Aryan Brotherhood	Prisons

⁶⁸ "Gangs in Florida." Gang and Security Threat Group Awareness. Florida Department of Corrections. 9 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/gangs/fl.html>>.

Aryan Nations	Multiple Cities/Counties
Asian Gangsters	Pinellas
Baby Demons	Miami
B-Boys	Pinellas City
Bad Boys	Hillsborough
Basin Street Rat Pack	Tallahassee
Bellaire Boys	Clearwater
Black Angels	Wimauma
Black Gangster Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Black Guerilla Family	Multiple Cities/Counties
Black Hawks	Hillsborough
Black United Soldiers	Tallahassee
Blackheart	Miami
Bloods	Multiple Cities/Counties
Blue Arrows	West Palm Beach
Broadview Mob	Broward
Carol City Lynch Mob	Carol City
Carver Shores Boys	Orlando
City Of Chaires Posse	Tallahassee
Cloud Nine	Ft. Lauderdale
Criminal Minded Posse	Lake Worth
Crips	Multiple Cities/Counties
Crypt Disciples	Pensacola
Danger Zone	Palatka
Davie Boys	Broward
Death Squad	Pompano Beach
Devil Boys	Tampa
Dixie Court Players	Okeechobee
Dixie Playboys	Ft. Lauderdale
Dog Pound Gangsters	Polataka
Dogg Pound	Miami
Dover Locos	Plant City
Down By Law	Palm Beach
Du Rag Posse	Palm Beach
Eastside	Bradenton
Eastside Locos	Manatee

Eastside Posse	Orlando
Eau Gallie Posse	Eau Gallie
Ebony Kings	Jacksonville
El Rukn	Multiple Cities/Counties
Ex-Legion	Broward
Familia	Multiple Cities/Counties
Five Percenters	Multiple Cities/Counties
Flip Side Posse	FL State Prison
Flipside	Lake Wales
Folk Disciples-Chap 6	Orlando
Folk Nation	Multiple Cities/Counties
Fort Pierce Boyz	Fort Pierce
Fountain Head Posse	Melbourne
Fourth World Mafia	Pompano Beach
G.O.D.S. MG	Multiple Cities/Counties
Gang Colors	Miami
Gang Of 14	Jacksonville
Gangster Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Gaylords	Coral Springs
Ghost Gangster Disciples	Lake County
Grand Theft Auto	Hillsborough
Grateful Dead MG	Multiple Cities/Counties
Hell's Angels	Multiple Cities/Counties
Hollywood Criminals	Hollywood
Holton St. Boys	Leon
Imperial Gangsters	Multiple Cities/Counties
Imperial GD	Multiple Cities/Counties
Inner Circle Assassins	Pompano Beach
Insane Cobras	Okaloosa CI
Insane Gangster Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Int. Gangster Association	Orlando
International Posse	Multiple Cities/Counties
Jackson Height Posse	Tampa
Jacksonville City Boys	Jacksonville
Jamaican Posse	South Florida
Jamestown Project Gang	St. Petersburg

Joe Louis Street Posse	Tallahassee
Junkyard Jits	Ft. Pierce
King Garden Boys	Miami
Ku Klux Klan	Multiple Cities/Counties
La Cruz	Hollywood
La Familia	Tampa
La Raza	South Florida
La Vida	Sunrise
Lake Bradford Boys	Leon
Latino Bad Boys	Miami
Latin Counts	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Eagles	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Folk	Miami
Latin Force	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Gangster Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Kings	Multiple Cities/Counties
Latin Thug Posse	Palm Beach
Legion	Hollywood
Legion of Doom	Miami
Longwood Lost Boys	Longwood
Lynch Mob	Palm Beach
Mafia Boys	Miami
Maniac GD	Miami
Maniac Latin Disciples	Multiple Cities/Counties
Miami Boyz	Miami
Mickey Cobras	Lee County
Money Kings	Ft. Myers
Most Powerful Nation	Davie
MS 13	Multiple Cities/Counties
N.S.W.W.P.	Multiple Cities/Counties
Nasty Boys	Titusville
Neta	Orlando
Niggers From Lackawanna	Jacksonville
Night Hawks	Jacksonville
Northside Nation	Broward/Miami

Northside White Boyz	Ft. Myers
Opa Locka Boys	Opa Locka
Outlaws	Multiple Cities/Counties
P Stone Nation	Multiple Cities/Counties
Pagans	Multiple Cities/Counties
Parson's Gang	West Palm Beach
P-Dogs	Tampa
Peckerwoods	Jacksonville
People In Control	Tampa
People Nation	Multiple Cities/Counties
Pine Manor Posse	Ft. Myers
Pompano Bloopers	Pompano
Pompano Boys	Tampa
Port Of Tampa Gang	Tampa
Project Boys	Quincy
Quincy Jaw Jackers	Quincy
Red Revolutionary Militia	Washington CI
Righteous Gangster Disciples	Tampa
Rockbrook Boys	Tallahassee
Rollin 20's Crips	Panama City, Tallahassee
Romans Of Fowler Ave	Tampa
Rude Boys	Ft. Pierce
Second Power	Kendall
Shower Posse	Jacksonville
Side by Side Boys	Miami
Simon City Royals	Multiple Cities/Counties
Skidrow	Pompano Beach
Skie Row	Pompano
Skinhead (Racist)	Multiple Cities/Counties
Skullheads	Miami
Solidos	Multiple Cities/Counties
Southside Neighborhood Gp	Tallahassee
Spanish Cobras	Miami
Spanish Gangsters	Multiple Cities/Counties
Spanish Law	Boyton Beach
Spanish Lords	Multiple Cities/Counties

Stoners	Lake Wales
Street Action Posse	Miami
Sureno 13	Multiple Cities/Counties
Sur XIII	Multiple Cities/Counties
T.N.S.	Dade
Tampa Boyz	Tampa
Tampa Posse	Tampa
T-Dogs	Titusville
Terror Of Dome	Immokalee
Texas Syndicate	Prison
The Konneticut Kids	Miami
The Unforgiven	Prison
Thug Life	Pensacola
Thunder Cats	Palm Beach
Town & Country Villains	Tampa
Tre Duce Folk	Pensacola
Tres D	Tampa
Truman Arms Posse	Pensacola
Twin Colts	Okeechobee
Unforgiven	Multiple Cities/Counties
United Kings	Multiple Cities/Counties
Us Niggers Love Violence	Ft. Lauderdale
Vados Locos	Miami
Venice Shoreline Crips	Lee County
Vice Lords	Multiple Cities/Counties
Victory Park Zoe Pound	Miami
VIP	Tampa
W/B-Boys	Clearwater
Warlocks MG	Multiple Cities/Counties
West Side Crips	Lake Wales
Westside Boys	Hialeah
Westside Duce	Tampa
Westside Folk Disciples	Lee County
Westside Gangsters	Deerfield
Westside Locos	Bradenton
Westside Mafia	Jacksonville

White Aryan Resistance	Multiple Cities/Counties
White Fence	Coral Springs
White Pride	Kissimmee
Worldwide Folk	Multiple Cities/Counties
Y.L.O.	Dade
Young Bloods	Ft. Walton Beach
Young Folk	Hillsborough
Young Gun	Tallahassee
Young Riders	Webster
Zoe Pound	Miami
Zoo Nigger	Multiple Cities/Counties
Zulus	Multiple Cities/Counties

APPENDIX C:

EXISTING FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR COMBATING CRIMINAL GANGS

1. [Faith-Based and Community Initiatives \(FBCI\): At-Risk Youth and Gang Prevention](#)
Provides resources regarding faith-based and other efforts to prevent and neutralize juvenile delinquency, especially gang-related crime.
2. [High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area \(HIDTA\) Program](#)
The HIDTA Program enhances and coordinates drug control efforts among local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies. The program provides agencies with coordination, equipment, technology, and additional resources to combat drug trafficking and its harmful consequences in critical regions of the United States.
3. [National Gang Center \(NGC\)](#)
The NGC is a collaborative effort between the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This Web site features the latest information about anti-gang programs and links to a wide range of resources.
4. [National Institute of Corrections \(NIC\)](#)
NIC is an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice that provides training, technical assistance, information services, and policy/program development assistance to Federal, State, and local corrections agencies. NIC also has resources for various issues pertaining to correctional populations, including prison gangs.
5. [National Youth Gang Center \(NYGC\)](#)
The purpose of the NYGC, which is operated by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), is to assist policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in their efforts to reduce youth gang involvement and crime by contributing information, resources, practical tools, and expertise towards the development and implementation of effective gang prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies.
6. [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\)](#)
OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports states and communities in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and to improve the juvenile justice system so that it protects public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to the needs of juveniles and their families.
7. [Project Safe Neighborhoods \(PSN\)](#)
PSN is a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime in the United States by

networking existing local programs that target gun crime and providing those programs with additional tools needed for success.

8. [U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\)](#)

ICE is responsible for identifying and shutting down vulnerabilities in the nation's border, economic, transportation and infrastructure security.

APPENDIX D:

EXISTING FEDERAL FUNDING FOR COMBATING GANGS

1. [Community Capacity Development Office \(CCDO\)](#)
The Weed and Seed strategy aims to prevent, control and reduce violent crime, drug abuse and gang activity in designated high crime neighborhoods across the country.
2. [Drug-Free Communities Support Program](#)
The Drug-Free Communities Support Program is designed to reduce substance abuse among youth; enable community coalitions to strengthen collaboration; enhance intergovernmental collaboration, cooperation, and coordination; enable communities to conduct data-driven, research-based prevention planning; and provide technical assistance, guidance, and financial support to communities.
3. [Gang Resistance and Education and Training \(GREAT\) Program](#)
Annually, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) makes monies available to help fund local GREAT Programs. The funds are restricted to law enforcement agencies only.
4. [Justice Assistance Grant \(JAG\) Program](#)
This program allows States and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and to improve the criminal justice system.
5. [Juvenile Accountability Block Grants \(JABG\) Program](#)
The JABG program is administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and provides block grants to States that have implemented or are considering implementation of legislation and/or programs promoting greater accountability in the juvenile justice system.
6. [Office of Justice Programs \(OJP\) State Administering Agencies](#)
Many OJP formula grants are awarded directly to State governments, which then set priorities and allocate funds within that State. For information on how a State distributes formula grant funds, contact the administering State Administering Agency.
7. [Public Housing Drug Elimination Grants Program](#)
The Public Housing Drug Elimination Program provides grants to fund drug elimination and other crime prevention activities in public and American Indian housing. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is authorized to make these grants available to selected public housing authorities and Native American housing agencies for the purpose of eliminating drug-related crime in their communities. Activities that may be funded through these grants include employment of security personnel and investigators, reimbursement to local law enforcement for

additional services, physical improvements for security, support of tenant patrols, and programs to reduce crime and drug use by residents.

8. [Safe Schools/Healthy Student \(SS/HS\) Initiative](#)

The SS/HS Initiative is a federal grant program designed to prevent violence and substance abuse among our Nation's youth, schools, and communities.