



CARE BRAVELY

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Stop the Iron Pipeline: LifeBridge Health Launches Initiative to Raise Awareness and Inspire Action Around Trafficking of Illegal Guns into Maryland

Film and Anthem from Logic, Grammy-Nominated and Maryland Native Hip-Hop Artist, Features Young Singers from Baltimore-Area Music School and Serves as Centerpiece of Movement to Engage Communities, Young People and Leaders

Initiative Builds on Health System's Efforts to Reduce the Impact of Gun Violence on Individuals and Communities

Baltimore – LifeBridge Health, a leading health system in Maryland, is launching “**Stop the Iron Pipeline,**” an initiative that seeks to bring awareness to Marylanders around the issue of illegal gun trafficking, encouraging them to take action and share their own stories of gun violence. Maryland has among the nation’s highest rate of out-of-state illegal gun imports, accounting for two-thirds of all gun crimes in the state, according to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. Traffickers bring these guns in from other states along Route I-95 – a major north-south corridor through the East Coast states known as the “Iron Pipeline.”

The Stop the Iron Pipeline movement aims to give a voice to the impact of gun violence, a concern both LifeBridge Health patients and community members say affects their health and well-being.

“Our health system’s mission is to care for people and our communities, and gun violence is affecting our communities, including people’s physical, mental and emotional health. No place is immune from gun violence, and we know that being exposed to violence can create long-term and adverse health effects. We hope the Stop the Iron Pipeline movement can be a way for community members to come together, raise our voice and do something to address this public health crisis,” says Neil Meltzer, president and CEO of LifeBridge Health.

He adds, “Gun violence is not isolated; it reaches every corner of our communities – from big cities to small towns and everywhere in between. It creates ripples of physical and emotional trauma that can last for generations. As a community-focused health system, we believe we are in a unique position to work with a variety of partners and organizations to raise awareness about how gun violence is affecting our communities and see what we can do together to decrease its impact.”

In the health system’s 2024 community health needs assessment, respondents named gun violence, neighborhood safety and gun safety among their top health-related social concerns,

along with issues such as access to insurance and the affordability of healthy foods. In June 2024, the surgeon general declared firearm violence to be a public health crisis.

Maryland has, at times, led the nation in the rate of illegally trafficked guns used in crimes – nearly three times the national average, according to the 2020 Giffords Center analysis. Additionally, research from the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health published earlier this year in [JAMA Network Open](#) concluded that “interstate gun transfers are a major contributor to gun crime, injury and death in the United States.”

“Many Marylanders are likely unaware of the Iron Pipeline and its detrimental impact on our state. Stop the Iron Pipeline represents a unique opportunity to educate and engage with our fellow citizens and encourage action to ultimately reduce the impact of gun violence. Nothing will change if no one speaks up, and LifeBridge Health is advancing the conversation and advocating for safer, healthier communities,” says Meltzer.

THE FILM AND THE ANTHEM: Grammy-Nominated Hip-Hop Artist Logic Wrote and Recorded Song about the Iron Pipeline with Backup Vocals from Baltimore-Area Kids

The centerpiece of the Stop the Iron Pipeline campaign is an anthem called “Pipeline,” written by Maryland native hip-hop artist Logic, an accomplished, Grammy-nominated artist and mental health advocate.

“In launching this movement, we wanted to find an engaging way to reach people, particularly younger generations. Firearms are a leading cause of death among children and teens in the United States, and we know that young people are a driving force in societal movements around those issues that impact them. Through the powerful connection of music, we saw a way to engage and energize this audience in particular to join our effort to Stop the Iron Pipeline,” says Brian Deffaa, chief marketing officer for LifeBridge Health.

With a compelling track by Logic, complemented with the cinematic video that follows the road trip of a gun trafficker and concludes with him selling a gun to a teenager, creators hope the film will provide a close-up and disturbing look at the issue with an emotional punch that will inspire action.

To achieve the compelling message and enhance the impact of the film, the expertise of The Music Playground, an award-winning music production and supervision house, was brought in to oversee the entire music process from inception to completion. Their contribution was invaluable in securing Logic for the project, as well as coordinating the choir and crafting the final track arrangement.

“From the very first call, we were captivated by the vision and the critical mission to prevent gun trafficking. It’s been an honor to contribute to such a powerful project, where music amplifies a vital message. Playing a key role in the development process has been both inspiring and rewarding. From the outset, we knew Logic was the ideal artist to champion this cause—his artistry and dedication to addressing critical social issues brought unparalleled depth and authenticity to the project,” says Sydney Ferleger, president of The Music Playground.

“Working with a musician who is passionate about the cause and able to connect with a younger audience was vital to our movement. Logic’s Maryland roots, combined with his passion and musical prowess, made him the ideal artist for this initiative. He created an anthem that embodies the spirit of the mission and vividly articulates the societal impact of gun violence and the threats of the Iron Pipeline,” says Tyler DeAngelo, chief creative officer of StrawberryFrog, the agency that developed the Stop the Iron Pipeline campaign with LifeBridge Health.

“Growing up in Maryland, I saw how gun violence tears apart families and communities—it’s an issue that hits close to home and feels deeply personal to me. That’s why I’m proud to support the Stop The Iron Pipeline initiative. Smuggled guns are fueling so much of the bloodshed, and this effort is about cutting off that supply and making a real difference. I contributed to this powerful project in the way I know best—through music and lyrics—telling the story of The Iron Pipeline and the impact it has. My hope is that this initiative helps create a better, safer future for the next generation,” says Logic.

Lyric sample:

*That's how the people where I'm from feel,
all we know is what we know they done fed us a pill,
but when it comes to bullets on our block we must appeal,
they make us pick a side no one to confide,
when we young they tell us we could be whatever but they lied*

The song’s refrain repeats, “Put 'em down and get up, Put 'em down and get up. This is motivator for the people that been fed up. Put 'em down and get up, Put 'em down and get up. This is motivator for the people that never let up.”

DeAngelo adds, “To accompany Logic’s powerful lyrics and vocals, we knew it would be particularly meaningful to cast voices of Maryland children. Given the campaign’s goal to engage younger people, we looked for a children’s choir in Maryland to add a unique and deeply resonant touch to the anthem.”

THE CHILDREN’S CHOIR

Thirteen young singers, ranging in age from five to 13, provided backup vocals on the track. They came from Resonate Baltimore, a Baltimore-area music school. The creators reached out to local arranger and producer Monét Guthrie to compose the backup track and find the young singers for the piece.

Rather than go to an established choir, Guthrie envisioned creating a fresh and organic sound. She reached out to Resonate Baltimore cofounder and instructor Melissa Chin, who brought together a group of her students to create the Resonate Baltimore Children’s Choir. The recording for the “Pipeline” vocals was the first time the children performed together.

“The arranging and recording process for Stop the Iron Pipeline was incredible. I drew from the emotions of my own experiences with gun violence to create unifying chants and convicting harmonies that complement the raw energy of Logic’s compelling verses. This was also a milestone for Resonate Baltimore Children’s Choir, marking their first involvement in such a

socially conscious project. Witnessing them step into the studio, their voices blending for the first time, was truly moving. There was a sense of wonder and excitement in the air as we worked to capture both the urgency of the issue and the hope for a better future. Their innocence and optimism brought a new layer of depth to the song and a reminder of how music can unite generations in the fight for change,” says Guthrie, producer and cofounder of STEMS Music, a Baltimore production and staffing company. Guthrie directed the children’s choir during the recording at Wrightway Studios.

“As we’ve recorded at Baltimore’s Wrightway Studios for years and collaborated with Monét on numerous album projects, this collaborative partnership felt like a natural extension of our shared commitment to meaningful storytelling and our established creative synergy. We’re proud to have been part of this important work and eagerly anticipate its impact,” says Ferleger.

Melissa Chin, co-founder of Resonate Baltimore, says, “This was a moment I will never forget. Watching these students step up and give their all to something this important just fills my heart. Seeing them show up with their unique gifts and make it happen with so much love and pride is powerful. They have such big hearts and to see their joy and excitement as they take on this moment is a blessing that words can’t even capture. They remind us of just how much we can do when we come together as a community.”

The lyrics in Logic’s anthem specifically call out young people and call out leaders to do something about the Iron Pipeline.

Lyric sample (2):

*This doesn’t stop with the pipeline it starts with the right time
to open up these young minds and system,
callin’ community politicians
to take people from beneath and put ‘em in higher positions
this is your job to keep more alive
that’s why I put the gat down and never glorify*

THE CAMPAIGN AND CALL TO ACTION: stoptheironpipeline.org

The anthem and three-and-a-half-minute short film will be shared on social media, with vignettes airing on local broadcast media, streaming services and other outlets. Stop the Iron Pipeline will also be featured in print and billboard advertising across the state, including the Washington, D.C. metro area.

The multi-faceted Stop the Iron Pipeline campaign seeks to build a movement empowering Marylanders and even those outside the state to advocate for policy changes and fight gun trafficking.

The website StopTheIronPipeLine.org created by marketing agency Planit, serves as the initiative’s hub where community members can learn more about the Iron Pipeline and take action to share their concerns. The website will host a petition that visitors can sign to share their support, including advocating for action from Maryland’s Center for Firearm Violence and

Prevention. There will also be a portal to connect visitors with their representatives at the national and state level.

PERSONAL STORIES OF GUN VIOLENCE

The initiative also looks to show how gun violence has directly and indirectly affected individuals. Community members are encouraged to post their personal stories through the website, as well share one-to-two-minute videos through social media using the hashtag: #stoptheironpipeline.

These experiences provide real-world voice and perspective on the individual and personal impact of gun violence. These stories will also be shared on the website and through social media to amplify the message and impact of the campaign.

“Every day we hear a story of a gun that’s been brought to a school or disagreement that escalates into gunfire or a domestic violence conflict exacerbated by the threat of a gun. Even for people who may not have a direct connection to gun violence, they worry when they get a text from their child’s school and think twice about going into a mall or other areas where large numbers of people gather. We welcome everyone to share how gun violence, or the threat of gun violence, affects us all,” says Adam Rosenberg, vice president of violence intervention and prevention at LifeBridge Health and executive director of LifeBridge Health Center for Hope.

PARTNERS

Along with the community members, LifeBridge Health is connecting with businesses and other organizations to partner on the Stop the Iron Pipeline campaign. This network of partners will amplify efforts to raise awareness, advocate for policy changes and support communities affected by gun violence.

Campaign media partners currently include: The Baltimore Banner, *Baltimore* magazine, WBAL-TV and WJZ-TV.

LifeBridge Health welcomes more partners to join the movement to Stop the Iron Pipeline.

LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH AND GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Stop the Iron Pipeline campaign builds on LifeBridge Health’s legacy of taking on challenging issues affecting the health of people in our communities. LifeBridge Health is recognized as a national leader for its public health approach to address the effects of gun violence.

CEO Neil Meltzer has been to the White House twice this year at the invitation of the White House Office on Gun Violence, including serving as one of the lead presenters at a June summit on public health and hospital-based strategies to address gun violence.

“We all understand the benefits of prevention compared to treatment when it comes to our health, whether it’s cancer, heart disease or diabetes. Now we are seeing positive results of

taking a public health approach to gun violence; if we can prevent or reduce the impact of gun violence, we can improve the health of our communities,” says Meltzer.

He adds, “Our doctors, nurses and caregivers treat those affected by gun violence and see firsthand how it can shatter lives. Often overlooked are the victims’ families whose lives are also dramatically changed by an incidence of gun violence. Those who witness the violence, including community members, are also affected, leaving lingering trauma, so LifeBridge Health has built programs and services to try to meet those needs.”

LifeBridge Health’s Center for Hope is a first-of-its kind facility that brings together teams who support people affected by violence, ranging from domestic, elder and child abuse to community violence. Through its integrated programs, including Safe Streets and PAAVE (Pathways to Advocacy Against Violence Every day), Center for Hope seeks to break the cycle of violence and reduce its impact on individuals and communities.

In 2021, Center for Hope launched the Red Desk Project, a public art display of school desks painted red to signify children who are no longer in school because they have been killed by either abuse or gun violence.

Rosenberg says, “For every gun homicide there is a blast radius of a dozen or so children impacted by that homicide. The Red Desk project aimed to make a strong statement that deserves attention from the community and action. Stop the Iron Pipeline makes an equally bold statement and challenges us to not be complacent and think that there is nothing that we can do to prevent the effects of gun violence on people in our communities.”

CEO Neil Meltzer concludes, “Some may say that taking on gun violence is too complex a challenge. However, doing nothing implies that we are okay with what’s happening in our communities. How many times will we say, ‘We can’t believe this happened here’ before we’re willing to do something? Stop the Iron Pipeline and the fight against illegal gun trafficking is about people coming together to make a difference.”

Assets for media:

The film, interview clips, images from the campaign, images of the children’s chorus recording session and viewing party, and other assets for media are available at:

www.lifebridgehealth.org/stoptheironpipeline-media

About LifeBridge Health:

LifeBridge Health is one of the largest, most comprehensive providers of health services in Maryland. LifeBridge Health includes Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, Northwest Hospital, Carroll Hospital, Levindale, Grace Medical Center and related subsidiaries and affiliates. For more information, visit www.lifebridgehealth.org

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