

EMBRY

FOR BALTIMORE

MAYOR 2016

BLUEPRINT FOR FIGHTING CRIME

PROVEN STRATEGIES
TO MAKE OUR
COMMUNITIES SAFE

Executive Summary

Last year, the number of murders in Baltimore rose more than 60 percent, and the number of non-fatal shootings surged by more than 70 percent. Baltimore is, once again, one of the most violent cities in America. This is a tragedy but also a truth. And that truth, we all must fight to change.

This blueprint for reducing crime in Baltimore is born of a career that Elizabeth Embry has spent as a leader fighting crime and pursuing justice in Baltimore. As Deputy State's Attorney, she worked with prosecutors and police, community activists and neighborhood leaders to oversee one of the most dramatic reductions in violent crime in the history of Baltimore. As Mayor, Elizabeth will build on this experience and proven record of success to make our communities safe again.

To **end the bloodshed on our streets**, Elizabeth will:

- Lead a **district-by-district strategy** that targets the individuals and gangs who are the worst engines of violence.
- Deploy **specialized, geographic-based strategies** that work with communities to target the hubs of violence.
- Revitalize the **CeaseFire** program.
- Expand the **Safe Streets** program.
- Get **guns carried illegally** off our streets.
- Target **sexual and domestic violence**.
- Implement a formal **parole call-in** initiative.
- Bring competence to our **use of technology**.
- Create a culture of **accountability and transparency**.

To **rebuild trust between our communities and law enforcement**, Elizabeth will:

- Mandate **body cameras** for all police officers.
- Recruit a **police force that is of Baltimore**.
- Change how we **investigate allegations of police misconduct**.
- Revive the **Civilian Review Board**.
- Reform the **Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights**.
- Provide the right **incentives and training for smart policing**.
- Expand **service benefits** to officers.

To **end the war on drugs**, Elizabeth will:

- Rewrite the criminal justice playbook to **divert drug offenders** to treatment and rehabilitation instead of central booking and prison.
- End arrests for simple **possession of marijuana**.
- End the **cash bail system**.
- Invest in **specialized programs** for mental health, sex work, veterans and the homeless.
- Make **drug treatment** more readily available.

To **reform our approach to juvenile crime**, Elizabeth will:

- Invest in **wrap-around services** for at-risk youth.
- Advocate for better **educational services in juvenile facilities**.
- Expand our use of **restorative justice** programs.
- Open recreational and educational centers and **increase after-school and summer opportunities**.

To **close the revolving door of crime**, Elizabeth will:

- Press for the **automatic expungement** of criminal records.
- Expand the **Public Safety Compact model**.
- Invest in **transitional housing and services**.
- Deepen partnerships with stakeholders to **help ex-offenders obtain jobs**.
- Eliminate parole and probation **supervision fees**.
- Resolve **outstanding warrants for low level misdemeanors**.

Introduction

We lost 344 of our neighbors to violence last year. It began with Leon Flemming, a 38-year-old man found shot in the head in Northeast Baltimore mere minutes into the year; it ended with Jameel Woodard, a 37-year-old man killed not far from an elementary school in West Baltimore. In between, mothers, sons, fathers, and daughters were violently and prematurely taken from their loved ones and our City. They ranged in age from 68 to just 9 days old.

Some of the victims had contributed in life to the violence that has marred our Baltimore. Some had struggled as children, failed by a system that focused on treating them as criminals instead of as humans. Some had lost faith in the police's ability to protect them. And some had fought back against gang violence only to fall victim to it themselves.

None of them deserved to die. All deserved more from our City.

Last year, the number of murders in Baltimore rose more than 60 percent, and the number of non-fatal shootings surged by more than 70 percent. Baltimore is, once again, one of the most violent cities in America. This is a tragedy but also a truth. And that truth, we all must fight to change.

We must move to a different strategy, one that replaces a high arrest policy that burdens entire communities with best practices and proven approaches to target the most dangerous people and places that drive the violence on our streets. We need to rebuild the community's trust in the responsibility of the police to protect and serve us all. We need to bring an end, at long last, to the misguided and inhumane war on drugs that has criminalized rather than treated addiction, and led to the mass incarceration of Baltimore citizens, fueling for too long the break-up of families and the erosion of entire neighborhoods. We need to provide a network of support for at-risk juveniles while they are young so they do not commit acts of violence once they are older. And we need to offer an open hand to ex-offenders when they leave prison so they do not revert once again to a life of crime.

This is my blueprint for reducing crime in Baltimore. It arises out of my experiences and my record of achievement as a leader fighting crime and pursuing justice in Baltimore. When I was Deputy State's Attorney, we oversaw one of the most dramatic reductions in violent crime in the history of Baltimore. We brought homicides to under 200 for the first time in over 30 years, and reduced violent crimes to their lowest levels in nearly 40 years. We worked together, prosecutors and police, community activists and neighborhood leaders, to bring the engines of violence to justice, producing a surge in the conviction rates for felony crimes. And, at the same

time, we cut arrests in half and diverted thousands of victims of addiction and poverty to the resources and services they so desperately needed, rather than simply throwing them in prison.

This blueprint is only one part of my plan to turn around the City. In the weeks to come, I will also release detailed strategies for other challenges facing the City, including jobs, education and housing, to name only a few. Indeed, these challenges are interwoven. For we will not be able to put an end to the cycles of violence and crime in our City if we do not forge pathways out of poverty in the poorest, highest crime neighborhoods; if we do not find solutions to our underperforming schools; if we do not address the lack of affordable housing and the scourge of vacant homes.

We can get at these problems. But doing so requires a strong and effective leader with a proven track record of leadership and achievement, one who understands the real complexities of the challenges we face and has shown the ability to bring people together to solve problems and make progress – not in politics, but on our streets and in our neighborhoods.

I invite all of you to read this and the blueprints to come, and reach out to me at elizabeth@embryforbaltimore.org with your comments and thoughts. For it will take all of us, working together as a community, to make Baltimore the safe, just, healthy, and prosperous City we all want, need, and deserve.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Embury". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

End the Bloodshed on our Streets

Progress in our City is impossible if our streets are not safe, and investments in our neighborhoods are not enough if we do not also cure the epidemic of violence. Under Elizabeth's leadership as a prosecutor, felony conviction rates increased, sentences for gun crimes went up, more violent offenders were incarcerated, and murders and violent crime reached their lowest levels in decades. Last year, however, the progress we made has reversed course, and Baltimore set a record for its per capita murder rate. All told, nearly 1 out of 635 City residents were the victim of a murder or a non-fatal shooting last year – statistics that have, somehow, failed to shock our standard City politicians out of their sense of entitlement and complacency.

As Mayor, Elizabeth will take action to drive down violent crime and make our City streets safer. She will:

- **Lead a district-by-district strategy that targets the individuals and gangs who are the worst engines of violence.** Elizabeth will use integrated teams of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, probation agents and parole officers and task them with building strong cases against violent criminals and gangs. She has previously used this strategy to reduce violent crime, and to do it again, we need her proven leadership, unrelenting focus and willingness to place progress above politics.
- **Deploy specialized, geographic-based strategies that work with communities to target the hubs of violence.** Different neighborhoods have different needs: in some areas, murders and shootings plague the streets, while in others, burglaries, robberies, and street assaults are the primary areas of concern. And even within particular neighborhoods, it is specific corners and buildings are often the hot spots for violent crime. Elizabeth will deploy micro-targeted, geography-focused approaches to combating violence that are informed by both community experience and law enforcement intelligence.
- **Revitalize the CeaseFire program.** The CeaseFire program focuses criminal justice attention on the small number of repeat offenders most likely to commit violence, partnering with community stakeholders – such as the faith-based community and social service organizations – to provide those offenders with access to resources and opportunities so they can choose a different path. CeaseFire has a proven record of success in other cities and has shown early success in Baltimore, and we need to ensure that the necessary resources are committed to making the program work.

- **Expand the Safe Streets program.** The Safe Streets program, which uses community mediators to canvass neighborhoods and defuse situations likely to result in gun violence, has led to a significant reduction in violent crime in the several Baltimore neighborhoods where it has been deployed. As Mayor, Elizabeth will expand this program to other neighborhoods while providing the oversight and resources it needs to repeat its successes.
- **Get guns off our streets.** Elizabeth will advocate on a national, state, and local level for broader gun control to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. She will lead the effort to make it a felony to illegally carry a loaded gun on the streets of Baltimore, and to increase the penalty for illegally transferring firearms. She will also revitalize the GunStat program, a critical initiative that tracks gun arrests and seizures, and she will use intelligence, data and advanced forensic tools to fight gun trafficking and stop the pipeline of guns into the City.
- **Target sexual and domestic violence.** Elizabeth will commit the resources to eliminate the backlog of rape kits, ensure that evidence is properly collected, stored, and managed, provide support services for victims, and require police to capture photographic evidence of domestic violence at the scene of a report.
- **Implement a formal parole call-in program.** Law enforcement officials developed a program in certain neighborhoods in Chicago in which authorities called in parolees with histories of violence or gun offenses, informed them of the nature of the federal firearm laws and the risks of gun possession, had community members convey clear antiviolence messages from community members, and identified social service opportunities. There was a 37 percent reduction in homicide in the neighborhoods that tried the program, and has been expanded to other communities across the country. As Mayor, Elizabeth will pilot a similar program in Baltimore.
- **Bring competence to our use of technology.** Today, some of our most basic services in the criminal justice system are not functioning at an acceptable level, and while making government work is not the stuff that brings headlines, it is exactly what a Mayor needs to do every single day. For example, Elizabeth will ensure that every 911 call is answered immediately, and that those who need translation or language assistance are provided it quickly and compassionately. At the same time, Elizabeth, will supplement traditional law enforcement tools with modern approaches to combating crime such as the use of data analytics, and vetting the efficacy of smart guns that can only be fired by authorized users for the Baltimore Police Department.
- **Create a culture of accountability and transparency.** Often, our citizens see the arrests of violent criminals, but not what follows. The public deserves the opportunity to be

able to track the progress of the criminal justice system, so they can assess the performance of their public servants in keeping them safe. Elizabeth will hold her administration open and accountable to the public, making data available to the public not only on the incidence of violent crime, but also on what percentages of felonies have been ‘solved’ by way of charge and then what the ultimate outcomes of those charges are by tracking the case through to resolution. As Mayor, Elizabeth will have effective mechanisms, including a revitalized CitiStat, to ensure that she and her senior staff have direct oversight over the administrative and operational work of the police department.

Rebuild Trust Between Our Communities and Law Enforcement

There is no more important or challenging job than that of police officer. Their responsibility to us is immense – to pursue justice and peace without partiality or prejudice, to keep us safe and our homes secure in the face of fearsome conflict, rapidly changing circumstances, and often grave danger. We are thankful to those who fulfill their great duty to us, day and night in, day and night out.

But there are officers who fail in their commitment, whether out of fear or insufficient training, or as a result of a split-second mistake or a lifetime of bias, conscious or not. Regardless of the reason, the imperfections of some police officers can have profound, even fatal, consequences. We can do so much more to help the overwhelming majority of officers who are dedicated to doing the right and just thing. And at the same time, we must take more aggressive action to hold police accountable for their actions when they betray our trust. We deserve that, as do the good women and men of the police force. We all suffer from the bad deeds of the few, unless we can be certain that misconduct will never be tolerated and will always be punished. A foundation of trust and legitimacy between law enforcement and the public is essential to effective policing and the safety of our City.

As Chief of the Criminal Division in the Office of the Attorney General, Elizabeth helped to author the first-in-the-nation state guidelines to prevent local law enforcement officers from engaging in racial and other forms of discriminatory profiling. As Mayor, Elizabeth will ensure these guidelines are fully implemented in Baltimore, and take other steps to ensure that law enforcement is responsive and accessible to the communities they serve. She will:

- **Mandate body cameras for all police officers.** Body cameras are a change that is both good public policy, and a win for the community and police. For the community, body cameras can provide verifiable evidence if misconduct occurs, and deter misconduct because officers know that their behavior is being recorded. For police, body camera footage can provide evidence if they are unfairly alleged to have committed a crime. Finally, the data collected will provide an unprecedented supplement to training programs, which will inform response strategies and make both our officers and communities safer.
- **Recruit a police force that is of Baltimore.** Today, less than a quarter of BPD officers actually live in the City. This divide between residents and the police force that serves them contributes to a deeply harmful “us versus them” mentality for both the police and the community. The current Mayor has proposed an annual property tax incentive for living in the City, but we can do more, through innovative incentives that increase or vest the longer

an officer remains a City resident, as well as other financial incentives for officers who rent in the City. Elizabeth will convene community representatives and members of law enforcement to evaluate the most effective incentives that will also benefit communities, such as allowing officers who live in the City to take their police cars home with them – an initiative that makes police cars present and visible in the community rather than in headquarters or district parking lots.

- **Change how we investigate allegations of police misconduct.** Today, we delay and defer administrative investigations – sometimes for years – while a criminal investigation is proceeding. We need to establish a system in which criminal and administrative investigations proceed in parallel, with all appropriate walling off of the investigations and investigators that such an approach would require to ensure fairness.
- **Revive the Civilian Review Board.** The Civilian Review Board should be a valued and meaningful tool for providing communities with a voice in law enforcement relations, but in Baltimore it has been gutted by vacancies and deprived of a substantive role in the process. As Mayor, Elizabeth will empower the Board, hiring additional investigators, ensuring that seats remain filled, and improving transparency to the public. Elizabeth will also work to ensure that the findings of the Civilian Review Board are meaningfully considered in the Department's administrative process.
- **Reform the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights.** Elizabeth supports the commonsense reforms to the LEOBR suggested by the Maryland Chiefs of Police, such as an extension in the statute of limitations for investigating complaints of misconduct from 90 days to a year and allowing police departments to fire or suspend without pay an officer charged with misdemeanors that are serious assaults. She is also interested in the reforms recently proposed by a legislative workgroup and will closely monitor their development.
- **Provide the right incentives and training to promote smart policing.** All too often, we have done wrong by law enforcement and our communities by setting incentives that distort officers' decision-making and push them away from quality policing. We have rewarded law enforcement for increasing the number of arrests, rather than evaluating them on the basis of more important benchmarks such as reduction in crime, outcomes in cases, and increase in community satisfaction. As Mayor, Elizabeth will hold the police to metrics that actually promote community policing and a safer Baltimore. Elizabeth will also mandate that police officers receive the most up-to-date training on how to confront problems in the community, including cognitive and procedural justice training.

- **Expand service benefits to officers.** Offering educational benefits to law enforcement officers isn't just a bonus for those who serve, but also contributes to increased professionalism and better overall performance. One recent study, for example, found that a college degree significantly reduces the likelihood that an officer will use force as their first option. As Mayor, Elizabeth will restore tuition reimbursements to officers to help them obtain college degrees, while ensuring that the educational benefits translate into tangible benefits to the community.

End the War on Drugs

For a half-century, we have been jamming a square peg into a round hole by addressing a public health issue – namely, drug addiction – through a criminal justice model. This flawed framework has had unintended consequences for both addicts and the community as a whole. For *both* those suffering with addiction and those who want safe neighborhoods and clean streets, we can do better. After decades of a failed drug policy, it is time for a paradigm altering approach that treats addiction as a disease. And for other minor, non-violent offenders, we need commonsense solutions that reduce incarceration, save taxpayer money, and put people on the path to work.

As Mayor, Elizabeth will build on her proven record of getting non-violent offenders out of the system, into treatment, and back into the workforce. She will:

- **Rewrite the criminal justice playbook to divert drug offenders to treatment and rehabilitation instead of central booking and prison.** As Mayor, Elizabeth will undertake a complete overhaul of how we handle minor, non-violent drug offenses, diverting these individuals *before* arrest and *away* from the criminal justice system. They should be assigned to case workers -- not prison cells -- to be given both immediate shelter and food and long-term resources such as drug treatment, job readiness, and housing opportunities. The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program offers one model for a new approach.
- **End arrests for simple possession of marijuana.** This is an area where the Mayor has the power to act immediately. We don't want people using marijuana, but we also shouldn't lock our youth up for doing so, or saddle them with a criminal record that does long-lasting harm to their future and educational and employment prospects. It costs taxpayers too much money, and it causes a host of other detrimental and counterproductive effects on individuals and their families when alternatives to arrest are more effective at reducing use.
- **End the cash bail system.** Too many people sit in jail in our City because they do not have access to sufficient funds to make the bail set by court commissioners or judges. This system is unfair, inefficient, and costs taxpayers unnecessary money by keeping low-level offenders incarcerated – at State expense – due to their poverty rather than the risk they present to public safety. A system of pre-trial supervision instead of cash bail costs a small fraction of the expense of incarceration, while still ensuring that that individuals appear in court. Elizabeth will advocate to end the cash bail system, ensuring that those who are locked up pre-trial are there because they represent a threat to society or flight risk, not because they are poor.

- **Invest in specialized programs for mental health, sex work, veterans and the homeless.** As Deputy State's Attorney, Elizabeth substantially increased the availability and efficacy of specialized diversion programs for a host of vulnerable populations. As Mayor, she will integrate work across the State's Attorney, the Police Department and the Judiciary to continue the expansion of these programs, to ensure that individual defendants are able to access the kind of services they need to avoid re-offending.
- **Make drug treatment more readily available.** Far too many people in our City have been affected by the plague of drug addiction, and we simply do not have adequate resources coordinated effectively committed to the problem. And we need to acknowledge that there is not a one-size-fits-all model for success in treatment: for some, inpatient/residential treatment is the only way to move onto the path to recovery; for others, intensive outpatient or medically-assisted treatment can help. Elizabeth will work to make these options available on demand to those who want to get off of drugs, and rebuild their lives.

Reform our Approach to Juvenile Crime

The U.S. Department of Justice recently found that that Baltimore is continuing to violate federal and state law in its treatment of juveniles in the criminal justice system. Our current approach pulls children away from school, away from family, and into a criminal justice system where they are far too often dragged into a lifelong cycle of poverty and despair. More than 60 percent of the youths who go through Baltimore City's juvenile justice system are rearrested within a year of release. This is an abject tragedy – through neglect, we guarantee that we are losing another generation of children to a life of crime. And the impact of this system on African-Americans and certain disadvantaged neighborhoods in particular only perpetuates the deep disparities in our City.

As Mayor, Elizabeth will pursue smart strategies that invest in children and give our youth the support and treatment they need to stay on the right path. She will:

- **Invest in wrap-around services for at-risk youth.** The most effective solution to the dilemma of at-risk youth is to identify them before they enter a life of chronic, violent crime. Elizabeth will invest in proven models such as Thread, the Choice Program at UMBC, ROCA in Boston, and Multisystemic Therapy that provide high risk young people and their families with dedicated one-on-one support, job training, and other services they need to become successful members of our community.
- **Advocate for better educational services in juvenile facilities.** When juvenile offenders do not receive the education they need while incarcerated, they are far more likely ultimately to drop out of school and fall into a life of crime as an adult. The educational services in the Maryland juvenile justice system are wracked with problems and shortages – the NAACP recently filed a federal complaint against the system for its failures. As Mayor, Elizabeth will work with the State to provide the programs and instructors necessary to give the children of Baltimore a better chance at success when they emerge from these facilities.
- **Expand our use of restorative justice programs.** Baltimore is home to the Community Conferencing Center, one of the largest and most active restorative justice organizations in the country. Studies show that their work reduced re-offending rates in young offenders by 60 percent, through a program that diverts the offenders from the criminal justice system and brings them together for dialogue with offenders, their supporters and the community. Elizabeth will increase our use of these programs, including through the referral of more cases from the juvenile justice system.

- **Open recreational and educational centers and invest in after-school and summer opportunities.** We need to identify enriching ways to engage our youth when they are not in school, especially between the hours of 3 pm to 6 pm when delinquency is most likely to occur, and yet all too often our City has slashed funding for these programs in recent years. And there has never been more need or hunger among the City's youth for out-of-school opportunities. As only one example, this year alone, over 1,000 children applied for summer jobs in the City YouthWorks program in less than 24 hours. As Mayor, Elizabeth will expand the City's after school programs, work with businesses and other key stakeholders to expand summer job opportunities, and open not only recreation centers where children can play in a safe environment, but also educational opportunities where they can receive tutoring outside of school.

Close the Revolving Door of Crime

Forty percent of Marylanders released from prison will return to prison within three years. And although the number of returnees from Baltimore is not public, estimates range as high as 70 percent or more. This revolving door is at the very heart of the cycle of crime, violence and poverty in the City, one that exacts a disproportionate impact and heavy toll on minorities and underprivileged neighborhoods. Evidence shows that the surest way to ensure that ex-offenders do not return to prison is to give them an opportunity for a job and self-sufficiency. Achieving this takes strong leadership, smart policies and targeted investments, and the creation of effective partnerships across law enforcement, prosecutors, businesses and anchor institutions, foundations, the faith-based community and civic services.

As Mayor, Elizabeth will take action to end the cycle of crime. She will:

- **Press for the automatic expungement of criminal records.** In Maryland, individuals who were arrested but then cleared of charges, or who were convicted of certain low-level, non-violent and non-theft offenses, are entitled to have their records expunged or shielded. But thousands each year find it nearly impossible to do so due to complexity and bureaucratic delay, imposing a barrier as they seek to obtain jobs or housing or restart their lives. Elizabeth will advocate for legal changes to allow the automatic removal of these records from public view.
- **Expand the model of the Public Safety Compact.** Elizabeth will work with the State of Maryland to expand models such as the Public Safety Compact, an innovative public-private partnership that finances in-prison drug treatment and comprehensive transition services upon release, through the savings the State realizes through reductions in recidivism and incarceration. The recidivism rate for ex-offenders in the program is less than 10 percent after three years, and it has already saved the government \$2.5 million to date.
- **Invest in transitional housing and services.** Too often, rehabilitation programs are understaffed or uncoordinated, and returning citizens are forced to focus on survival instead of success, even though these programs are far less expensive than the \$38,000 a year it costs to incarcerate a person if they return to a life of crime. As Mayor, Elizabeth will work to ensure that we support reentry programs in areas such as drug treatment, job training, transitional housing, social work, and mentoring, and that we effectively and seamlessly target these programs to the neighborhoods where ex-offenders are most likely to return.

- **Deepen partnerships with stakeholders to help ex-offenders obtain jobs.** One of the most effective ways to prevent an ex-offender from returning to prison is to help them obtain a stable job. There are proven models for doing so that have shown they can work in our City. For example, the America Works initiative uses a pay for performance model that has placed 4,000 people in jobs, and produces a recidivism rate of less than 10 percent. And anchor institutions such as Johns Hopkins Hospital have committed to training and employing ex-offenders, and these employees prove to have retention rates that are as high as the rest of the workforce. As Mayor, Elizabeth will build stronger partnerships with the business community and these stakeholders and expand initiatives to provide sustainable pathways for employment to ex-offenders.
- **Eliminate parole and probation supervision fees.** In Maryland, ex-offenders must pay a supervision fee for each month they are on parole or probation. However, these fees burden individuals with debt at the very moment they are reentering society, and raise relatively little money for the government. Virginia abolished its parole supervision fees after concluding that they undermined the goal of rehabilitation. Elizabeth will seek to end these fees due to the detrimental effect they have on rehabilitation efforts.
- **Resolve outstanding warrants for low level misdemeanors.** Tens of thousands of people in Baltimore are subject to open warrants for failing to appear in court. Most of them are low-income and African American, and although they may have been initially charged with traffic or other minor offenses, they now face the loss of their freedom if they surrender. This is harmful to our system in so many ways: it distracts our law enforcement from real police work, it contributes to overcrowding in our jails, it wastes taxpayer money, and it is a heavy burden and a barrier to advancement for the people affected. As Mayor, Elizabeth will partner with the courts and the State's Attorney Office to resolve outstanding warrants for low level misdemeanors.