

Vikings Player E.J. Henderson joins fight against illegal guns

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The City of Minneapolis and its officials recognize that youth violence is a public health epidemic that requires a holistic, multi-faceted response.

The city, in partnership with a host of community stakeholders, including NFL player E.J. Henderson, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak and other public officials released a public service announcement in which Henderson calls on people to report illegal gun violence in order to protect youth.

"I love Minnesota and I've met so many great people here," Henderson said in the PSA. "There are many kids working hard to succeed in school and on the field. Our young people can grow up to do amazing things, but I am troubled by the gun violence in our communities."

The Department of Family and Health Support for the City of Minneapolis has identified four goals in its so-called Blueprint for Action. These goals are to connect every youth with a trusted adult, intervene at the first sign that youth are at risk for violence, restore youth who have gone down the wrong path and unlearn the culture of violence in our community.

"We all need to come together to help protect our youth," said Henderson. "A kid's life and their bright future could be in your hands. If you see an illegal gun, do not hesitate to say something about it."

The initiative is a part of a national movement called Mayors Against Illegal Guns (MAIG). It comes during a time when the Washington, D.C. gun lobby is attempting to allow non-residents to carry concealed and loaded guns in their communities.

According to Mark Glaze, Director of MAIG, forced gun-law reciprocity is opposed by more than 625 mayors, many national, regional and state law enforcement organizations, a coalition of more than 30 national religious groups, a coalition of 56 domestic violence victim advocacy organizations, the American Prosecutors Association, attorney generals, faith leaders and many others who care about states' rights and public safety.

"Unlike Florida, at least 23 states currently give police discretion to deny a concealed carry permit if the applicant has an arrest record or pattern of behavior that suggests that he would be a threat to others," Glaze said.