

Mayor Tishaura Jones & Congresswoman Cori Bush To Visit Denver Star Program — Discuss New Approaches To Public Safety

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ST. LOUIS, DENVER, CO – On Thursday, July 8, 2021, Mayor Tishaura Jones and Congresswoman Cori Bush will travel to Denver, Colorado to see firsthand the city’s public safety initiatives. The Mayor and Congresswoman will tour Denver’s Support Team Assistance Response (STAR) program, which redefines public safety by redirecting some 911 calls to mental health care professionals and social workers. Of the 1,351 calls STAR responded to over the last year, not one had to request backup from the Denver Police Department.

Mayor Jones and Congresswoman Bush will be hosted by Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock. The three elected officials will discuss models of public safety as it relates to alternatives to policing, COVID-19 vaccines, and social services for the unhoused.

“I talk frequently about connecting the right professional to the right call so our police can focus on their main job: Solving violent crime,” said Mayor Tishaura O. Jones. “Through STAR, Denver has led the way in reimagining how we deploy and use police for the correct situations. I’m excited to see this program up-close and connect with Mayor Hancock on lessons we can bring back to St. Louis to get shots in arms, improve public safety and better support our unhoused neighbors.”

“The People’s Response Act puts forward a vision for public safety in America that will save lives — and Denver’s STAR program is proving that this approach works,” said Congresswoman Cori Bush. “At a moment when St. Louis has led the nation in police killings for 7 consecutive years, we must look to proven strategies that will keep our communities safe. I’m grateful to Mayor Hancock for hosting me and Mayor Jones so that we can see firsthand the work that the People’s Response Act could fund. This visit is fundamental to our work of building a just and equitable St. Louis where we all can thrive.”

“I’m honored to welcome Mayor Jones and Congresswoman Bush to Denver, and to share the successes we’ve had with our innovative models around alternative response and support systems for our residents experiencing homelessness,” said Mayor Hancock.

[STAR is a community response program](#) made possible through collaboration between the Caring for Denver Foundation, Denver Police Department, Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD), Denver Health Paramedic Division, Denver 911, and community supports and resources. STAR provides person-centric mobile crisis response to community members who are experiencing problems related to mental health, depression, poverty, homelessness, and/or substance abuse issues. STAR created a path into the service connection system, directing certain calls to more appropriate support providers while redirecting them away from a costly emergency department visit or introducing the possibility of jail.

Last week, Congresswoman Cori Bush introduced [the People’s Response Act](#), which would create a division within the Department of Health and Human Services that would federally fund programs like the Denver STAR program.

Mayor Tishaura Jones and Congresswoman Cori Bush will be hosting a virtual media availability on Friday, July 9th at 1:00 PM CT. The elected officials will discuss their tour, their conversations with Denver officials, and their work to transform public safety

and reduce crime in St. Louis. To attend, please RSVP with Public Information Officer Nick Dunne at dunnen@stlouis-mo.gov.