

Mayor Tishaura Jones & Congresswoman Cori Bush Tour Public Safety And Social Service Locations, Meet With Denver Mayor Michael Hancock

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DENVER, CO – Today, Mayor Tishaura Jones and Congresswoman Cori Bush toured innovative public safety and social service facilities and met with Denver Mayor

Michael B. Hancock. The Mayor and Congresswoman traveled to Denver to learn more about Denver's Support Team Assistance Response (STAR) program, which redirects some 911 calls to mental health care professionals and social workers.

Mayor Jones and Congresswoman Bush met with Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock to discuss ways Denver, St. Louis, and the federal government can work together, learn best practices from each other, and open up pathways for funding to support these public safety initiatives. The three elected officials also discussed how Denver has boosted COVID-19 vaccination rates, STAR's effectiveness as a public safety program, and social services for the unhoused.

"We need to put St. Louis back on the map, and learning from other cities is part of how we do that," said Mayor Tishaura O. Jones. "STAR helps reimagine public safety and help police focus on their most important job: solving violent crime. I'm thankful to Mayor Hancock for hosting us on this trip and discussing how we move our cities forward with innovative programs, and I appreciate Congresswoman Bush's shared commitment to making St. Louis a city where everyone can thrive."

"Today's visit made it clear: the People's Response Act will save lives," said Congresswoman Cori Bush. "Public safety is public health — and Denver is leading the way in prioritizing care over criminalization. From supporting grassroots organizations like the Colorado Village Collaborative's Safe Outdoor Spaces program to serving unhoused community members, to launching the STAR program to respond to mental health and substance use crises, Denver has invested in non-carceral, community-centered approaches to public safety and those investments have produced tangible results. We must make this a reality in every community across the country — and that's why we need the People's Response Act to become law. I'm grateful to Mayor Hancock for hosting us, and to Mayor Jones for her dedication and partnership as we work to build a better future for St. Louis."



[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. Of the 1,351 calls STAR responded to over the last year, not one had to request backup from the Denver Police Department.

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 Jones' \$80 million initial American Rescue Plan direct relief proposal also calls for investment in programs like Denver's that help connect the right professionals to the right call.





Earlier in the day, Mayor Jones and Congresswoman Bush also toured the Colorado Village Collaborative's Safe Outdoor Spaces (SOS), or places where unhoused residents can go to be safe and receive wrap-around support services in a humane environment. For more about Safe Outdoor Spaces in Denver, [click here](#).

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.