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CONTACT: Darryl Stewart, 891-5586
Chief Don Blevins, 268-7233
Arnold Perkins, 267-8000

ALAMEDA COUNTY ADOPTS VIOLENCE PREVENTION BLUEPRINT

OAKLAND, July 12, 2005—By a unanimous 5-0 margin, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors took a step toward reducing all forms of violence plaguing county communities and families by adopting a comprehensive violence prevention plan entitled A Lifetime Commitment to Violence Prevention. The Supervisors followed up this action by approving, in principle, the hiring of a Violence Prevention Coordinator to help implement the plan. The Coordinator position is conditioned upon supporters raising additional funds. To date, more than $260,000 has been raised for this violence prevention effort from private and county sources.

The violence prevention plan has been a two-year effort, spearheaded by Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley, with support from cities, school districts, county agencies, law enforcement, faith-based groups, businesses, and community-based organizations. According to Supervisor Miley, “law enforcement plays a significant role in suppressing violence but cannot succeed alone in reducing violence without all of us participating. When we first started asking people what could be done to reduce violence we found consensus that some entity needed to take the lead and be accountable. For a countywide effort, that entity must be the county.”

The violence prevention planning effort has been guided by the Prevention Institute, a nationally known nonprofit based in Oakland. A broad leadership council has been led by Alameda County Probation Chief Don Blevins and Arnold Perkins, Director of the Alameda County Public Health Department. The leadership council identified six core strategies to address immediately: develop a violence prevention curriculum in elementary schools, build and strengthen re-entry programs for ex-felons, assist communities in creating comprehensive and targeted services in neighborhoods with high rates of violence, engage the business sector, compile and analyze data to determine needs and best practices, and develop funds and other resources. Subcommittees already have been established to address these strategies.

To review the complete blueprint or for other background information, go to www.preventioninstitute.org/alameda.html.

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