

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM TO KUMIKI GIBSON

FROM: Carol H. Rasco

SUBJ: National Youth Council Against Violence - file

DATE: July 13, 1995

The purpose of this memo is to express my strong endorsement of Prevention Council support through financial and technical assistance for the National Youth Council Against Violence. This group of young people had originally planned to hold a large national conference this summer but due to the financial needs for such a conference have determined it would be more feasible to hold an in-depth planning forum this summer.

**HISTORY**

Last year the Departments of Justice, Education and HHS sponsored a conference on youth violence which brought teams from communities throughout the country to DC. Each team was encouraged to include at least one young person.

The young people who were at the conference organized themselves and have been working over the last year to try to put together a youth summit on violence prevention. The leader of the group, Matthew Hampton, is a young man from Little Rock, and he has had the backing of the City Council and top businessmen in Little Rock to organize a planning effort for the young people.

As noted above, the group had originally hoped to do a full conference this summer but found the time and financial resources needed for such a large conference would necessitate a planning conference only for this summer. Matthew has made contacts with several of the departments in DC and has been working as well on contacts with private groups. Following the first Prevention Council meeting where the workplan for the Council was outlined, I asked Karen Pittman to meet with Matthew while she was recently in Arkansas, and subsequently they have met in DC. I know she along with my staff is impressed with the work the young people are doing. I also am aware that other departments and some private groups are very interested in supporting this effort and are looking to the Prevention Council to see if the Council will be endorsing the effort.

It is my feeling although not expressed directly by the young people that they quite frankly feel in a way they were used as backdrops last year at the conference due to its timing during the heat of the Crime Bill battle. This has motivated them to take up the challenge to do something themselves that is substantive. That was the challenge to them at the conference, and they are taking it seriously.

After I met with Matthew the first time in Arkansas but prior to the visit I asked Karen to have with him, I briefed the President on the efforts of the young people. The President has also been contacted for his support by adults in Arkansas who have been impressed with the work of the young people. He is quite interested in this administration showing support for the group and their upcoming conference. That is another reason I pursued having Karen visit with Matthew.

#### **URGENCY FOR RESPONSE**

Because the time before the meeting is growing short I am quite hopeful the Prevention Council can very quickly commit support in the form of dollars and staff expertise. I believe this commitment will multiply by other agencies and private groups coming forward.

I am very willing to discuss this matter with the Vice President in person if I need to do so. As mentioned above, the President did ask that I pursue this matter because he personally feels we should very definitely be showing support for these young people who took so seriously the challenge placed before them. I have told him I would keep him posted on the progress we are making.

Please advise me if there is anything I need to do further to pursue this issue of support by the Prevention Council. I will eagerly await an answer of what the response of the Council will be to the young people.

Many thanks!

cc: Leon Panetta  
Mack McLarty  
Jack Quinn  
Karen Pittman  
Gaynor McCown



**N.Y.C.A.V.**  
**NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AGAINST VIOLENCE**

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**Matthew Hampton**  
**Lead Planner**

May 2, 1995

President Bill Clinton  
First Lady Hillary Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Greetings from Little Rock. This letter comes to you both as an introduction and as an invitation from a group of young people working to solve the problem of youth violence.

My name is Matthew Hampton and I am a UALR student from Little Rock who has been working with youth and developing programs and initiatives to reduce violence and provide economic development opportunities for at-risk youth.

In August 1994, I attended the national conference in Washington, D.C. "Solving Youth Violence: Partnerships that Work," which was hosted by federal agencies, such as the departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services. The conference was inspirational, and I was especially proud to have been able to hear each of you speak there.

At that conference was born the National Youth Council Against Violence (NYCAV). This council was not started by me, adults, or the federal agencies. It began because 50 youth representing 26 states decided it was our responsibility to take charge of an opportunity to influence the nation and reduce violence. NYCAV's mission is to provide key federal government entities with the knowledge and perspective of the youth of America, as well as empower local youth to work in cooperation with their city and state governments. When Vice President Al Gore made his appearance at the summit, he also verbally committed to assisting in the development of a national youth council to help prevent violence.

On August 10-13, the City of Little Rock and NYCAV will host a National Youth Summit, which will be the beginning of a comprehensive youth strategy to prevent violence. This

strategy will focus on what youth can do to mobilize their communities, other youth and government nationwide to understand and more effectively deal with youth violence.

The strategy will be outlined at the culmination of the summit on August 13, six days before your birthday, President Clinton. NYCAV would like to present this strategy as a birthday gift to you or to the First Lady on your behalf, as well as to the nation. We would be greatly honored by your attendance at this presentation by NYCAV to the United States of America, which will occur at approximately noon on the 13th at the Little Rock Doubletree (Camelot) Hotel.

Mr. President and First Lady, your participation in this event will empower youth throughout this country to take a stand and be heard on a problem that effects us all. I plead for your support and appearance at this summit.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Hampton", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matthew E.P. Hampton  
NYCAV Lead Planner