



Larry D. Boone
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February 11, 2025

To the Urbana community,

Last week, we faced a heart-wrenching tragedy—one that could have been prevented. A tragedy that has left our community mourning the loss of three lives, including a seven-year-old child. This devastating event serves as a stark reminder of the domestic violence crisis we continue to grapple with in Urbana, as well as the persistent issue of gun violence.

For months, we have collected data, spoken out, and urged action to prevent such tragedies. Despite these efforts, we were met with skepticism and accusations. When I introduced initiatives like gun mapping to highlight the dangerous link between firearms and domestic violence, I was told I was instilling fear, that my data was misleading, and that I was exaggerating the problem.

Those who dismissed these concerns must now confront a painful reality: the risk is real. The violence is real. The lives we lose are real. We cannot afford to wait until another tragedy strikes. We must come together as a community to acknowledge the deep-rooted issues of domestic violence that are tearing families apart. We must recognize that data, when used responsibly, helps us identify patterns and implement solutions that can save lives.

This is not just a call for awareness—it is a plea for action. We need policy changes, better protections for survivors, and an urgent review of how we respond to domestic violence and firearm access. We must support the initiatives already in place, work together to improve them, and build a stronger, safer community for all. Together, we can prevent another senseless loss of life.

In my 30-plus-year career, I have witnessed—directly or indirectly—the loss of nearly 1,000 African American lives to gun violence. As an African American police chief, and as someone who grew up in a community where violence was all too common, I understand the pain behind these tragedies. However, I am no longer moved by the familiar refrain of “Now is not the time,” because the time for change is long overdue.

Now is the time to act—for those suffering in silence, for the children, and for the future of our community. We cannot wait for another tragedy to remind us of what we already know: domestic violence and gun violence are urgent crises that demand immediate action. We must work together to ensure that these injustices come to an end.

On behalf of the Urbana Police Department, we extend our deepest condolences to the families affected by this violence. We stand with you in grief, and we remain committed to doing the work necessary to prevent further loss.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "L. Boone".

Chief Larry D. Boone