

# **Alton Branch of NAACP President Issues Strong Response To 13-Year-Old Girl's Shooting**

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ALTON - Alton Branch of the NAACP President Leon Smallwood has responded to the recent tragic shooting of a 13-year-old girl in Alton that has been devastating to family, friends, and the community. The teen was shot and critically wounded on Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024. Three people are in custody on attempted murder charges of the girl.

**"Dear Residents of Alton,**

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you today, deeply troubled by the recent spate of gun violence that has plagued our beloved community. As President of the Alton Branch NAACP, I am compelled to speak out against these senseless acts of violence that have left families shattered and our community in mourning.

The recent shooting of a 13-year-old girl, fighting for her life as she lies in critical condition, serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for action - we cannot idly stand by our youth when their dreams are extinguished by the barrel of a gun. This tragedy, coupled with the loss of several teenagers and young men in the past two years, underscores the gravity of the situation we face."

These are suggestions from Smallwood-Bey on how to approach the problem in Alton:

1. Strengthen community-police relations:  
Building trust and collaboration between law enforcement and the community is paramount in fostering a sense of security and accountability.
2. Advocate for stricter gun control measures:  
We must urge our legislators to enact comprehensive gun control laws that ensure responsible ownership and prevent firearms from falling into the wrong hands.
3. Promote conflict resolution and mediation:  
Equipping individuals with the skills to resolve conflicts peacefully can help de-escalate tense situations.
4. Support victims and their families:  
Providing support services and resources to victims of gun violence and their families is crucial in helping them heal and rebuild their lives in the aftermath of tragedy.
5. In the face of adversity, let us stand together united, steadfast in our resolve to create a safer, more just community for all.
6. Together, we can turn the tide against gun violence and build a future where every member of our community can thrive and flourish.

Tori Porter, president of the Alton Branch of the NAACP Youth Council, also issued a response to the shooting. Read about Porter's work [here](#).