

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office of Communications



PRESS RELEASE

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Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Metropolitan Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier Announce Historic Low for 2012 Homicide Totals

88 Murders in 2012 Represent 51-Year Low for District

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Metropolitan Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier announced today that the District’s official number of homicides for 2012 represents the lowest number on record since 1961, with 88 murders for the calendar year.

The District’s homicide total dropped well below 100 – representing a benchmark not reached in half a century and a longtime goal of city leaders. The 2012 total highlights a significant four-year drop in homicides.

“This represents a tremendous milestone for public safety in the District. I want to commend Chief Lanier and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Paul Quander along with all of the members of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) for their efforts to reduce homicides,” said Mayor Gray. *“However, one murder is always going to be one too many. It does not matter where it occurs in the city; we must continue to work together as a city to reduce violence and crime in all four quadrants.”*

No longer the nation’s “murder capital,” D.C.’s number of homicides is dropping at a faster pace than the national average. The figure stands in stark contrast to the number of homicides during the crack-cocaine epidemic of the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the District’s annual murder total topped 400 for several years in a row.

In 2012, MPD’s case-closure rate for homicides was 82 percent, which is well above the national average.

“I have always felt that having fewer than 100 homicides District-wide was an achievable goal,” said Chief Lanier. “We had to get to a tipping point where it was clearly understood -- as both a city and a police department -- that we could reduce the number of homicides. We are now at that point, and our mentality has sent a clear message to the criminal population.”

“By focusing on gangs, guns and investing in technology in recent years we have made a real impact on violent crime,” Chief Lanier said. “We have also developed trusting relationships with our communities, and we are getting more information from the community than I have experienced in 23 years.”

The community has embraced the Department’s 50-411 text tip line. In 2012, MPD received 2,036 text tips, nearly six times the number of tips received since the year the system was launched in 2008. And reward payouts for violent crimes continue to increase.

MPD continues to connect with the community in a variety of ways. Approximately 16,000 residents are members of the listservs in all seven police districts. The department also uses Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts to publicize and solve crimes.

As overall homicides in the District declined, the city also saw notable reductions in homicides involving youth. Juvenile victims of homicides declined 85 percent, and juvenile homicide offenders declined 63 percent.

MPD’s focus on robberies also had a positive impact. Similarly to other cities around the country, the District began the first couple months of 2012 with a nearly 50 percent increase in robberies compared to the same period in 2011. The department worked diligently to address this challenge through a number of initiatives.

Mayor Gray commended Chief Lanier and MPD for getting offenders off the street, shutting down illegal fencing operations and working with the cell-phone industry to reform their policies to stop allowing the reactivation of stolen phones.

“As a result, we substantially reduced the number of robberies in the last several months, so that we ended 2012 even compared to the previous year,” Chief Lanier said.

“Public safety in the District has clearly been a top priority for my administration, and this will continue in 2013 as we work with MPD to continue making this city a safe place for those who live, work and visit here,” Mayor Gray said.

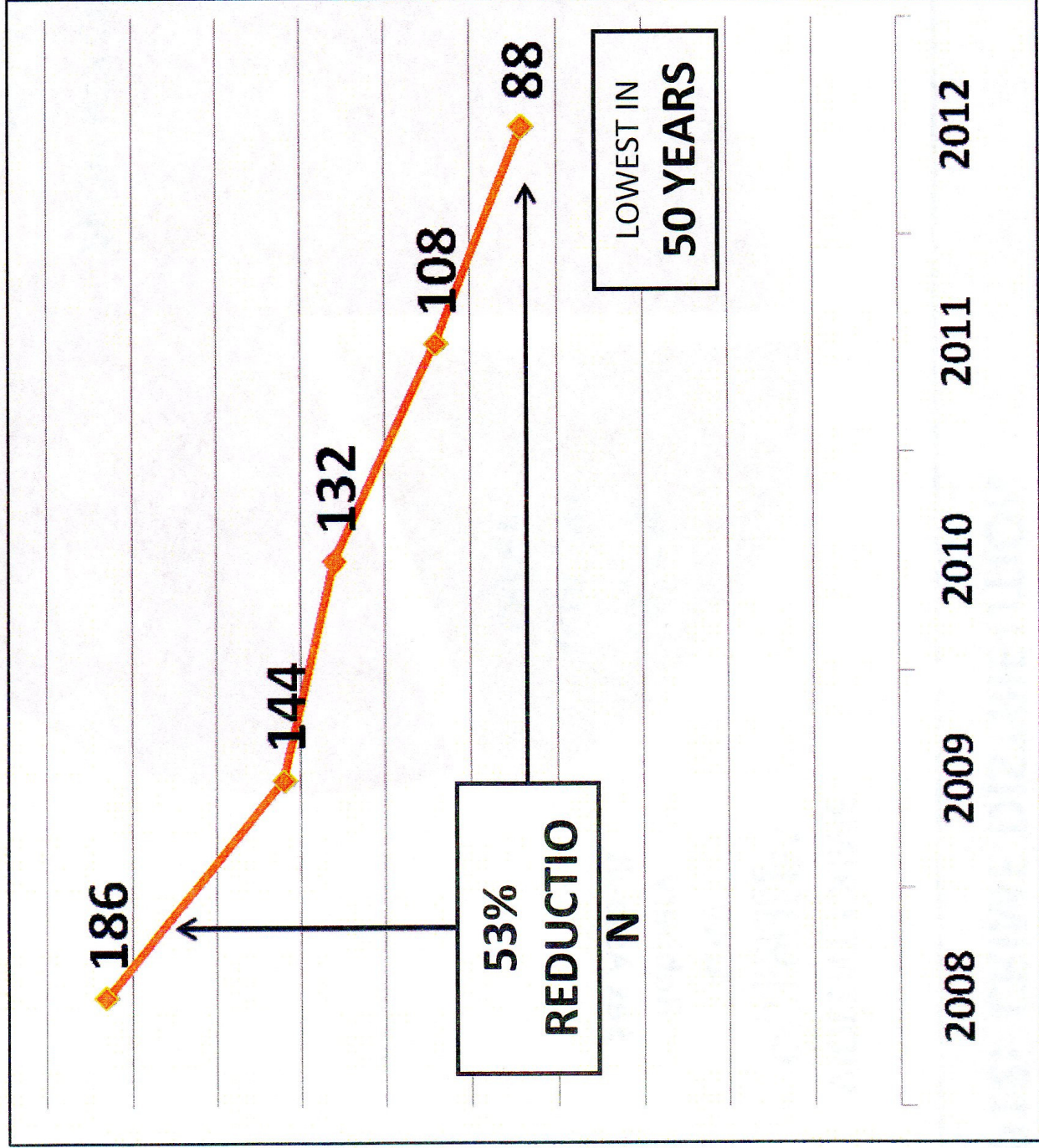
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CONTINUING HISTORICAL REDUCTIONS IN HOMICIDE

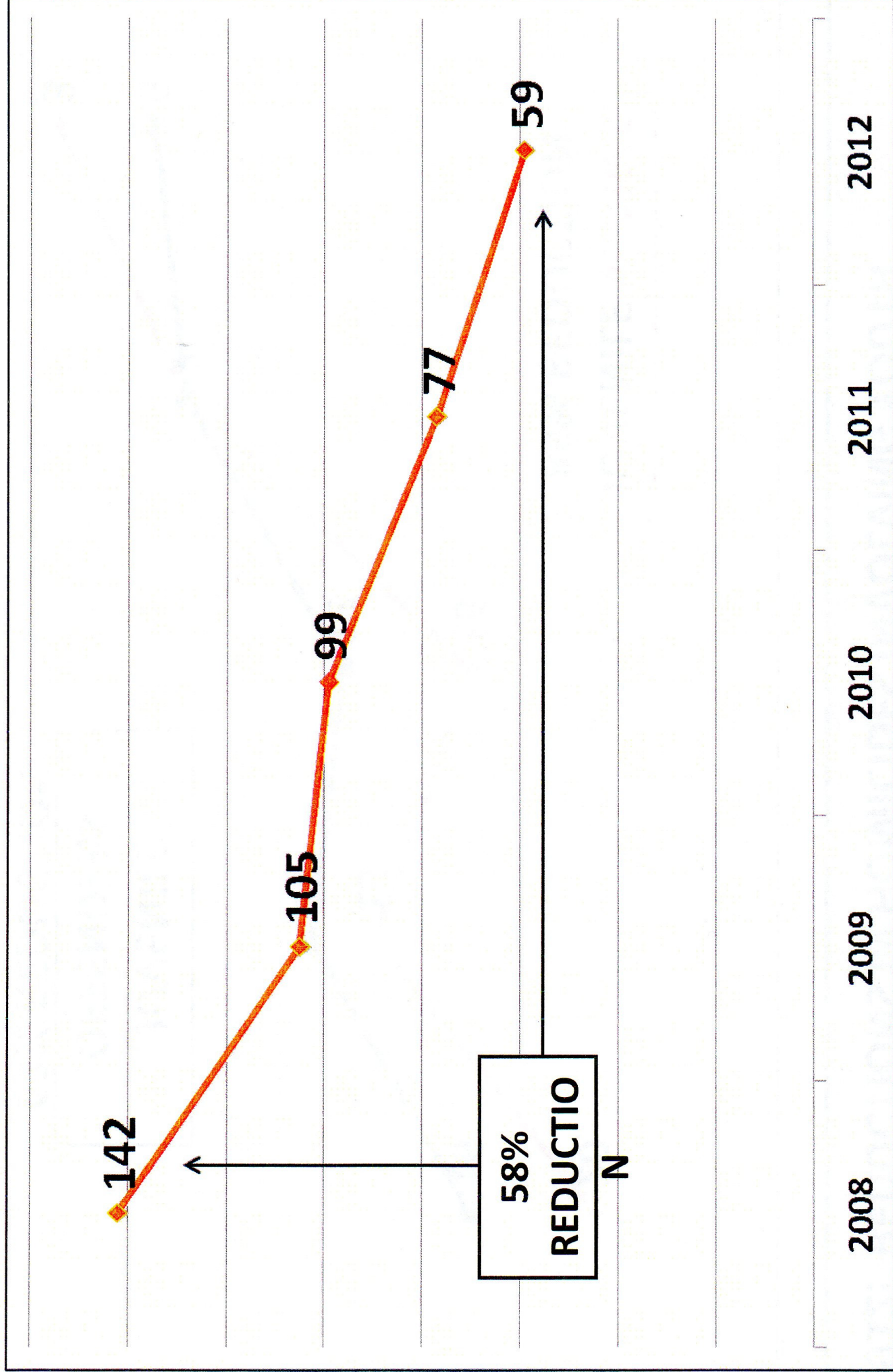
2008 TO 2012: ANNUAL NUMBER OF HOMICIDES IN WASHINGTON, DC



UCR HOMICIDE CLEARANCE RATE



2012: REDUCTIONS IN HOMICIDES BY GUN



2012: REDUCTIONS IN HOMICIDES INVOLVING YOUTH

