



Legislation Text

File #: 2018-0372, **Version:** 3

A MOTION requesting the executive to engage and collaborate with King County youth and young adults and their family members to develop a report on gun violence amongst youth and young adults.

WHEREAS, the most recent available Washington state Department of Health data show that firearms are the third leading cause of injury-related death in Washington state, killing approximately six hundred twenty-five Washington residents each year between 2009 to 2013, and firearms were involved in one in six of all deaths among youth ages fifteen to twenty-four, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Department of Health data also show that one hundred forty-six King County residents died from a gun injury in 2015 including six children age seventeen and younger. Statewide, thirty-nine children, who are age seventeen and younger, died as a result of firearms that same year. That is the equivalent of a child or teen being killed by gunfire every nine days. King County children represent fifteen percent of all children killed as a result of firearms statewide, and

WHEREAS, between 2013 and 2015, the Washington state Department of Health data show that twenty-five youth, age seventeen and younger, died by suicide in King County, of which seven used firearms. Statewide, one hundred eighteen youth died by suicide in Washington and forty-seven of these youth died from firearm suicide. King County youth represent twenty-one percent of youth suicide and fifteen percent of suicide from firearm statewide, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Department of Health data also indicate that ninety-five King County residents were hospitalized for nonfatal firearm injuries, including nine youth, age seventeen and younger, in 2015. Statewide, three hundred eight Washington state residents were hospitalized for nonfatal firearm injuries

in 2015, including thirty children under eighteen years old. King County residents represent thirty percent of all nonfatal firearm injuries statewide and approximately thirty percent of all nonfatal firearm injuries among children, and

WHEREAS, the January 21, 2014 Annals of Internal Medicine report finds that adolescents, between the ages of ten and nineteen years, with access to firearms are 2.6 times as likely to die by suicide as adolescents without access to firearms, and

WHEREAS, the December 2008 Journal of Adolescent Health study of adolescent (between the ages of ten and nineteen years) suicides by firearm found that over half were carried out with firearms from the adolescent's home. More than seventy-five percent of firearms used in suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or friend, and

WHEREAS, according to Public Health - Seattle & King County's ongoing analysis, monitoring and dissemination of data on firearm violence in King County, firearm violence has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and children of color are victims of homicide by firearms at a higher rate than white children in King County, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System estimated thirty-four percent of Washington adults eighteen years and older, which is one million eight hundred twenty-five thousand people, reported having a firearm in or around their home in 2015. Just under half of these adults, which is forty-six percent or eight hundred thirty-nine thousand people, reported having an unlocked firearm. Access to firearms, including storage practices, are a known risk factor for firearm suicide - especially among youth age seventeen and younger, and

WHEREAS, only twenty weeks into 2018, there have already been at least twenty-one shootings on elementary, middle and high school and college campuses in the United States, which averages to about 1.1 per week, and those shootings include a February 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and a May 18 shooting at Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas, and

WHEREAS, in the past five years, eight school shootings have occurred in Washington state, four of which resulted in injury or death, and

WHEREAS, during the 2015-2016 school year, the Washington state Superintendent of Public Instruction reported one hundred thirty incidents involving a firearm on school premises, transportation systems or school facilities, which resulted in sixty-two suspensions and thirty expulsions and, of these, twenty-one suspensions and fifteen expulsions were in school districts located in King County, and

WHEREAS, according to the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, in 2016, eleven percent of eighth-grade students, sixteen percent of tenth-grade students and twenty-three percent of twelfth-grade students in King County reported that they would not be caught if they carried a handgun without parental permission, and

WHEREAS, according to the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, in 2016, four percent of King County tenth-grade and twelfth-grade students reported having carried a gun on at least one day during the last thirty days, and

WHEREAS, gun violence, and threats of gun violence, in schools undermine the sense of security that all students should have in their learning environments, and

WHEREAS, local governments in Washington state have taken steps that work to increase gun safety, including encouraging safe firearm storage through the LOK-IT-UP program and enforcement of extreme risk protection orders in King County, and

WHEREAS, sensible gun safety legislation will strengthen protections for King County youth and young adults by reducing injury and death from intentional and unintentional shootings, and

WHEREAS, the 2015 City of Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Needs Assessment report found that engaging and receiving consultation from youth and families who are most impacted by violence is necessary to identify strategies to address systemic issues of violence amongst youth and young adults;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The executive is requested to engage and collaborate with King County children and young adults

and their family members to develop a report on gun violence amongst youth and young adults.

B. The executive should engage and collaborate with King County youth and young adults that are either at-risk of or have experience with the issue of gun violence.

C. The executive should use engagement and collaboration methods that may include, but not be limited to, individual and family interviews, focus groups and community meetings.

D. The youth and young adult report should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A comprehensive inventory of existing county programs that focus on youth violence prevention and intervention and other community-based efforts in the county, such as Best Starts for Kids, Community Correction, Juvenile Justice Data and the Family Intervention and Restorative Services Program, which is also known as FIRS, Gang Violence Intervention and Prevention initiatives and the Gun Violence Prevention Initiative; and

2. Methods and findings from the interviews and focus groups with youth, young adults, their families and providers who work with youth and their families on issues related to gun violence.

E. The youth and young adult report should inform recommendations and strategies to prevent youth and young adult gun violence.

F. The executive should present the findings in the youth and young adult report to the following:

1. Youth, young adults and their family members who participated in focus groups, interviews and community meetings;

2. The King County Gun Violence Prevention and Intervention Committee that includes representatives of law enforcement, civic groups and the King County prosecuting attorney's office;

3. Existing county programs that focus on youth violence prevention and intervention and other community-based efforts in the county that impact youth and young adults such as Best Starts for Kids and Zero Youth Detention;

4. The juvenile justice equity steering committee; and

5. Other county committee or task force charged with developing recommendations and strategies to prevent youth and young adult gun violence.

G. The executive should develop recommendations on how the county can support and strengthen community-based organizations' efforts to curb gun violence.

H. The executive should develop a final comprehensive report that includes the youth and young adult report and the recommendations as mentioned in sections E. and G. of this motion and transmit the report, and a motion accepting the report, by October 1, 2019, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy to the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for the committee of the whole, or its successor.