



Legislation Text

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A MOTION endorsing the student-led March 24, 2018, March for Our Lives, urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to reduce gun violence and to ban assault-style weapons, and calling upon the Washington state Legislature to repeal the state preemption in RCW 9.41.290, thereby allowing King County and other local governments to adopt common sense gun laws, rules and regulations that will protect its citizenry in the absence of state action.

WHEREAS, only eleven weeks into 2018, there have already been at least 15 shootings on elementary, middle, and high school and college campuses in the United States which averages to about 1.4 per week, and those shootings include a January 4 shooting at New Start High School in Seattle, a January 9 shooting at Coronado Elementary School in Arizona, a January 12 shooting at Jackson State University in Mississippi, a January 16 shooting at Montpelier High School in Vermont, a January 19 shooting at Del Norte High School in New Mexico, a January 20 shooting at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, a January 22 shooting at Italy High School in Texas, a January 23 shooting at Marshall County High School in Kentucky, a January 26 shooting at Dearborn High School in Michigan, a January 30 shooting at Belleville West High School in Illinois, a January 31 shooting at Lincoln High School in Philadelphia, a February 1 shooting at Salvador B. Castro Middle School in Los Angeles, a February 5 shooting at Oxon Hill High School in Maryland, a February 9 shooting at Pearl-Cohn High School in Tennessee and a February 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, 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, 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, in the last several years, mass shooting incidents involving assault style weapons and high-capacity magazines have occurred in locations across the United States including Tucson, Arizona; Aurora, Colorado; Newtown, Connecticut; Clackamas, Oregon; Virginia Tech University; Las Vegas, Nevada; Orlando, Florida; Mukilteo, Washington; and Parkland, Florida, and

WHEREAS, hundreds of innocent children and adults have been killed or injured in these incidents, and

WHEREAS, the people of King County mourn the loss of these lives, including the 17 innocent people murdered on February 14, 2018, at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland Florida, the deadliest school shooting since 2012, and

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 625 Washington residents each year between 2009 to 2013, and firearms were involved in one in six of all deaths among youth ages 15 to 24, and

WHEREAS, according to the Washington state Department of Health, 146 King County residents died from a gun injury in 2015, including six children ages 17 and younger, and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015 firearm fatalities cost almost \$200 million in medical costs and lost productivity in King County, and

WHEREAS, gun 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 state of Washington, through RCW 9.41.290, enacted in May 1985, has sought to explicitly remove authority from local governments to regulate dangerous weapons and ammunition; threatening public safety by depriving communities the ability to implement local common sense solutions to

the epidemic of gun violence, 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, regulatory gaps created by inaction at the state level remain, resulting in innovative efforts by local government being stymied and impeded by the state's preemption laws, and

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

WHEREAS, young people and local communities are engaging in civic action across King County and the world to call for the adoption of sensible gun laws, including the National School Walkout on March 14, 2018, marking the one month anniversary of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, and April, 20, 2018, the nineteenth anniversary of the shooting at Columbine High School, and

WHEREAS, students have seized the conscience of the nation with their demand for strong action to reduce preventable gun violence and on March 24, 2018, National March for Our Lives rallies and marches are being organized by local student leaders seeking to deliver an unmistakable message that now is the time to pass commonsense gun safety laws, and

WHEREAS, these local students are organizing March for Our Lives marches around King County, including in Auburn, North Bend, Seattle and Vashon, in conjunction with the national march in Washington, D.C., to demand that their lives and safety become a priority and that we end gun violence and mass shootings in our schools today, and

WHEREAS, the Seattle School District and Bellevue School District have passed resolutions that support the March for Our Lives movement and direct action on March 24, 2018;

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

A. The council wholly endorses the student led March for Our Lives on March 24, 2018, and

encourages all residents to participate.

B. The council urges the United States Congress to take immediate action to adopt measures aimed at reducing gun violence. The adoption of such measures must include effective background checks, prevent access to lethal assault-style weapons, and eliminate existing restrictions on, and fully fund, gun violence research. These policies must not have a disproportionate impact or negative effect on communities of color.

C. It is the intent of the council to protect the health and safety of county residents by developing innovative and meaningful policy that confronts gun violence. The council calls upon the Washington state Legislature to repeal the state preemption in RCW 9.41.290 and thereby allow local governments to enact common sense gun laws, rules and regulations that will protect its citizenry in the absence of state action.