



Legislation Text

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Clerk 01/08/2020

A RESOLUTION encouraging the Washington state Legislature to restore local authority to enact local firearm policies and pursue firearm policies that would benefit all Washington residents' health and safety.

WHEREAS, nearly 40,000 Americans die by suicide, homicide or accidents with firearms each year, and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the King County Board of Health passed a resolution calling on lawmakers to take meaningful action to address gun violence and committing to supporting efforts to reduce gun violence and supporting a strong mental health system which includes prevention and early intervention services, and

WHEREAS, in 2017 firearms accounted for 49 percent of suicides in Washington State and suicides made up 75 percent of firearm deaths during the same year, and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the King County Board of Health passed a resolution calling on lawmakers to take meaningful action to address firearm tragedy, and

WHEREAS, during the 2015-16 school year, the Washington state Superintendent of Public Instruction reported 130 incidents involving a gun on school premises, transportation systems or school facilities, and

WHEREAS, in 2017, 39,773 people died from gun-related injuries in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and

WHEREAS, in 2017, 849 deaths were caused by firearms in Washington state, and

WHEREAS, in 2016 and 2017, 298 King County residents were hospitalized for nonfatal injuries from firearms including 25 children under 18, and

WHEREAS, in King County, firearm fatalities cost approximately \$220 million in medical costs and lost productivity each year, and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the King County Board of Health adopted BOH18-04, requiring firearm dealers to post signs informing purchasers that firearms in the home significantly increase the risk of suicide, homicide, death during domestic violence disputes and unintentional deaths to children, household members and others, and

WHEREAS, in July 2019 the King County Board of Health held a two-day Gun Violence Prevention Summit to discuss issues related to gun violence in King County and hear from communities impacted by gun violence, health professionals, and researchers in the field of gun violence prevention;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Health of King County:

A. The Board of Health calls on the Washington state Legislature to eliminate state preemption and restore the authority of local and municipal governments to enact laws related to guns and firearms that build upon state law, prevent harm and injury and promote the ability of all residents to thrive;

B. The Board of Health supports state level firearm policies and funding that would benefit all Washington residents' health and safety such as:

1. Ending sales of high-capacity assault weapons and ammunition;
2. Strengthening and streamlining the state's background check system;
3. Enhancing mental health care and services for residents and communities impacted by gun violence;
4. Building our knowledge on the impact of guns in our communities by improving data collection, sharing and tracing of firearms used in crime, including reporting lost or stolen firearms;
5. Requiring all people who legally own firearms have appropriate safety training; and
6. Strengthening community-based efforts to prevent violence.

C. The Board of Health commits to continuing to build a public health and safety

approach to firearm injury prevention, in partnership with government agencies and institutions, community-based organizations and members of impacted communities.