

House Resolution 56

By: Representatives Scott of the 76th, Davis of the 87th, and Schofield of the 63rd

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing gun violence as a major public health problem and a leading cause of premature
2 death and committing to decreasing gun violence through enactment of initiatives based upon
3 data and research; and for other purposes.
- 4 WHEREAS, the burden of gun violence in the United States vastly outpaces that in
5 comparable countries; and
- 6 WHEREAS, of all firearm deaths in nearly two dozen populous, high-income countries,
7 including Australia, France, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, 82 percent occur in the
8 United States, with 91 percent of children under the age of 14 killed by firearms in this group
9 of nations being from the United States; and
- 10 WHEREAS, each year, more than 39,000 people in the United States die as a result of gun
11 violence, and tens of thousands more suffer nonfatal gun injuries; and
- 12 WHEREAS, gun violence affects people of all ages and races in the United States but has
13 a disproportionate impact on young adults, men, and racial/ethnic minorities; and

14 WHEREAS, among United States residents ages 15-24, homicide is the fourth leading cause
15 of death for non-Hispanic white residents, the second leading cause of death for Hispanic
16 residents, and the leading cause of death for non-Hispanic black residents; and

17 WHEREAS, guns are a weapon of choice for homicide and suicide; and

18 WHEREAS, guns are the leading method of suicide in the United States, accounting for half
19 of all suicide deaths; and

20 WHEREAS, 60 percent of firearm related deaths in the United States are suicides, with
21 attempted suicide by firearm resulting in death 85 percent of the time, compared to just
22 3 percent for other methods, such as drug overdose. This is significant because nearly
23 90 percent of people who survive an attempted suicide do not attempt suicide a second time;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, while most gun violence does not involve a mass shooting, in 2019 there were
26 418 mass shootings in the United States, killing 464 people and injuring another 1,710; and

27 WHEREAS, gun violence costs the United States \$280 billion annually; and

28 WHEREAS, the societal costs of firearm assault injury include work loss, medical/mental
29 health care, emergency transportation, police/criminal justice activities, insurance claims
30 processing, employer costs, and decreased quality of life; and

31 WHEREAS, gun violence is preventable through a comprehensive public health approach
32 that keeps families and communities safe; and

33 WHEREAS, a public health approach to preventing gun violence recognizes that violence
34 is contagious and can become an epidemic within a society; and

35 WHEREAS, primary prevention involves the use of core public health activities to interrupt
36 the transmission of violence, including:

37 (1) Conducting surveillance to track gun related deaths and injuries, gain insight into the
38 causes of gun violence, and assess the impact of interventions;

39 (2) Identifying risk factors associated with gun violence (e.g., poverty and depression) and
40 resilience or protective factors that guard against gun violence (e.g., youth access to trusted
41 adults);

42 (3) Developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to reduce risk factors and
43 build resilience; and

44 (4) Institutionalizing successful prevention strategies; and

45 WHEREAS, prevention does not require predicting who will be violent. Just as aviation
46 safety regulations make air travel safer for everyone, commonsense measures to prevent gun
47 violence make communities safer for everyone; and

48 WHEREAS, preventing death, disability, and injury from gun violence requires a public
49 health approach that involves data collection and surveillance, research to understand which
50 policies and programs are effective in decreasing gun violence, initiatives to implement those
51 measures that are shown to work, and continued surveillance and evaluation.

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
53 the members of this body recognize gun violence as a major public health problem and a
54 leading cause of premature death and commit to decreasing gun violence through enactment
55 of initiatives based upon data and research.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
57 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to
58 members of the public and the press.