



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

ACKNOWLEDGING JUNE AS GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH

WHEREAS, a national coalition of organizations has designated the first Friday in June as National Gun Violence Awareness Day, in honor of Hadiya Pendleton, a teenager from Chicago who was shot and killed in 2013, as well as the many other gun violence victims and survivors, commemorating this day by wearing orange; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association (AMA) declared firearm-related violence a public health crisis in 2016 due to its status as a leading causes of intentional and unintentional injury and death in the United States, and continues to advocate for common sense policies, laws and resources that reduce gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the United States has significantly higher gun homicide and suicide rates than all other high-income countries; and

WHEREAS, according with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), new analysis shows firearm homicide rates grew nearly 35% from 2019 to 2020, with disparities by race/ethnicity and poverty level widening, and firearm suicide rates remaining high. Firearm homicide rates are consistently highest among males, adolescents, young adults, and non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people. In 2020, firearm homicide rates increased across all age groups, with the highest rates and increases observed among those 10-44 years old. Considering age, sex, and race/ethnicity simultaneously, the largest increases in firearm homicide rates were among non-Hispanic Black males 10-44 years old; and

WHEREAS, gun violence has devastating consequences for young people and is now the leading cause of death among children, teens, and young adults under the age of 25; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is a complex problem fueled by systemic issues including historic disinvestment and structural racism, segregation, lack of access to healthcare, economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, according to the Cook County Medical Examiner's office, 90% of the total homicides in 2021 were carried out with guns, accounting for a devastating 1,005 gun homicides in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, Cook County Health's Stroger Hospital cared for nearly 1,100 patients with gunshot wounds, and spends an average of \$30,000-50,000 to treat a single victim of gun violence, amounting to an annual expenditure of \$30 - 40 million in initial hospital treatment, not including extensive outpatient rehabilitation and mental health care many patients require; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is cyclical, resulting from and causing psychological trauma for individuals and entire communities which is why victims injured by violence are among those most at risk for future injury, death or involvement in gun violence, highlighting the need for trauma-informed solutions that help break this cycle of violence; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is preventable and Cook County and partners at the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago have each committed historic amounts of funding through the American Rescue Plan Act, as well as corporate funding, for gun violence prevention and complementary supportive programming for at-risk residents that is evidenced based and

effective in reducing community violence; and

WHEREAS, in the Summer of 2022, the Cook County Justice Advisory Council awarded a historic initial \$75 million in Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction Grants, funding individual organizations and coalitions that represent 68 service providers; and

WHEREAS, gun violence in Cook County's Southland has become especially pervasive, devastating communities already struggling with inequality, disinvestment, and lack of emergency health services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the more than 5.2 million residents of Cook County, do hereby take this opportunity to acknowledge National Gun Violence Awareness Day, which took place on June 2, 2022; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in response to increased levels of gun violence experienced nationally and locally since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cook County leaders will continue to bring awareness and devote resources to emerging and evidence-based gun violence prevention strategies and advocate for gun safety measures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Cook County leadership will continue to coordinate with state and city partners in response to high levels of gun violence and work collaboratively to implement equitable and effective solutions that improve community safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be shared during the official proceedings of this Honorable Body in recognition of Gun Violence Awareness Month.