



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 20-0735, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

SUPPORT OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION REQUIRING UNIVERSAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ALL GUN SALES

WHEREAS, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) is an effective tool to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and other dangerous individuals, and since its inception, the background check system has blocked over two million gun sales to people who were prohibited from possessing guns; and

WHEREAS, despite this success, the system is undermined by legal loopholes and missing records that enable too many dangerous individuals to obtain weapons they later use to commit crimes; and

WHEREAS, in the United States, an estimated 40% of all gun transfers take place with no background check of the buyer, including sales online and at gun shows; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that state and federal agencies have failed to report hundreds of thousands of records of persons with dangerous mental illness into the NICS database, and 12 states have each submitted fewer than one hundred (100) mental health records; and

WHEREAS, on average, over 80 Americans are killed with guns on a daily basis and too many of those persons killed are the victims of crimes committed by individuals who are barred from purchasing or possessing guns under federal law; and

WHEREAS, over the last five years, gun violence and mass shootings throughout the nation have continued to occur at epidemic rates with an average of 2940 people per year being shot in Chicago and mass shootings across the nation occurring at a rate of more than one per day in 2019; and

WHEREAS, evidence shows that background checks save lives, as evidenced by the facts that in 16 states that already require background checks for unlicensed handgun sales, gun trafficking is 48% lower than in states that fail to require background checks for all gun sales; the rate of women murdered by an intimate partner with a gun was 38% lower than in other states; and the firearm suicide rate was 49% lower than in other states; and

WHEREAS, in a July 3, 2014 poll conducted by the leading research institution, Quinnipiac University, 92% of voters, including 92% of gun owners, supported requiring background checks for all gun buyers; and

WHEREAS, at the November 4, 2014 Gubernatorial General Election, a Cook County advisory referendum question was placed on the ballot calling for federal legislation requiring universal background checks for all gun purchases. Almost 90% of those Cook County voters who voted in the November 2014 election, voted in favor of Federal Universal Background Check legislation; and

WHEREAS, more than 50 national organizations support requiring a background check for all gun sales, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the International Associations of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the Police Executive Research Forum; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that federal Universal Background Check legislation is only one part of the solution to gun violence in Chicago and the Nation, it is, however, a fundamental and necessary part of the solution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board President and Cook County Board of Commissioners, support federal legislation requiring universal background checks for all gun sales and urges all State and Federal legislators representing the citizens of Cook County to do all within their power to pass such legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body.