



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 21-2664, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

DECLARING GUN VIOLENCE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

WHEREAS, Public Health Awareness raises awareness of the relationship between the health of individuals and the health of their communities; and

WHEREAS, there has been an increase in gun related violence in Cook County compared to the decrease in numbers over the past five years; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago has seen a sharp increase in gun violence in 2020 compared to previous years. In 2020 3,893 shootings were reported, compared to just 2,536 in 2019; and

WHEREAS, As of April 1, 2021, 703 people have been injured by a gun shot in Chicago, IL surpassing the total 2020 number by 183 cases; and

WHEREAS, The Cook County Medical Examiner's Office confirmed 875 gun-related homicides in 2020, breaking the previous record of 838 set in 1994 and;

WHEREAS, The Medical Examiner's office handled 970 homicides in 2020. Which was a more than 40 percent increase over 2019's total of 675; and

WHEREAS, African Americans were the victims of 78 percent of homicides and Latinos accounted for more than 16 percent of homicide deaths. Eighty-nine percent of homicide deaths were male. Seventy homicide deaths were under 18; 22 were under the age of 10. The majority (722) of homicides were in the City of Chicago. The last time Cook County saw more than 970 homicides was in 1996; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Health provides care for over 1,100 patients with gunshot wounds every year through Stroger Hospital, accounting for 20% of the patients that get treatment through the Comprehensive Trauma Unit. Costing the health systems anywhere between 30-40 million dollars a year; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Cook County will: Led by the Cook County Board President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners (County Board), in collaboration with the Cook County Sheriff's Department and other relevant parties; Assert gun violence as a public health crisis affecting our entire society; Assess internal policies and procedures to ensure solutions to gun violence as a core goal of Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will work with community organizations identifying specific activities to: (1) decrease gun violence among the youth (2) increase funding to the Justice Advisory Council programs specific to reduce gun-violence; (3) Work closely with Sheriff and local law enforcement agencies to create strategies to reduce the amount of illegal firearms in Cook County (4) work with marginalized populations to provide education on gun violence, issues and solutions(5) Advocate for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color, (6) support local, State, and Federal programs that advance anti-gun violence initiatives, and (7) and actively work towards reducing the 30-40 million dollars spent each year at Cook County Health on trauma from gun violence by creating a budget line item

specifically used for gun violence prevention an intervention; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will encourage other local, State, and national entities to recognize gun violence as a public health crisis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby supports the efforts to address public health disparities due to gun violence throughout Cook County.