

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1165

Declaring gun violence a public health crisis.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 9, 2022

Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. DEAN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COOPER, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SUOZZI, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. LEE of California) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Declaring gun violence a public health crisis.

Whereas gun violence has become the leading cause of death for children and adolescents in the United States, according to the latest mortality data by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

Whereas there have been at least 2,062 school incidents in the United States since 1970, causing 683 fatalities, and 1,932 injuries, according to the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security;

Whereas more than 311,000 students in the United States have experienced gun violence since the Columbine shooting in 1999;

Whereas, on April 16, 2007, 33 people were shot and killed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, Virginia;

Whereas the United States has experienced hundreds of public mass shootings in churches, schools, concerts, and movie theaters, including—

(1) on August 5, 2012, 6 people were shot and killed at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin;

(2) on December 14, 2012, 27 individuals, including 20 children, were shot and killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut;

(3) on June 17, 2015, 9 Black Americans were shot and killed at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina;

(4) on December 2, 2015, 14 people were shot and killed at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California;

(5) on June 12, 2016, 49 individuals, 90 percent of whom were Hispanic, were shot and killed at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in what is considered the deadliest attack on LGBTQ+ people in United States history;

(6) on September 16, 2016, 12 people were shot and killed at the headquarters of the Naval Sea Systems Command inside Washington Navy Yard in southeast Washington, DC;

(7) on October 1, 2017, 58 people were shot and killed and 546 others were injured in Las Vegas, Nevada, in what is known to be the deadliest mass shooting in United States history committed by a single individual;

(8) on November 5, 2017, 27 people were shot and killed at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas;

(9) on February 14, 2018, 17 students and staff were shot and killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida;

(10) on October 27, 2018, 11 persons were shot and killed at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania;

(11) on August 3, 2019, 23 people were shot and murdered during an act of domestic terrorism in El Paso, Texas, considered one of the deadliest attacks on a Hispanic community in modern American history;

(12) on May 14, 2022, 10 Black Americans were shot and killed in a racially motivated rampage at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York; and

(13) on May 24, 2022, 19 students and 2 teachers were shot and killed at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas;

Whereas in the United States—

(1) 111 people are shot and killed every day;

(2) 45,222 people died from gun-related injuries in the United States in 2020, representing a 43-percent increase from a decade prior;

(3) the gun homicide rate in the United States is at least 25 times higher than in other high-income countries;

(4) 54 percent of gun-related deaths in the United States were suicides in 2020;

(5) there have already been more than 200 mass shootings in 2022 where 4 or more people have been shot;

(6) there were at least 692 mass shootings in 2021, killing 704 people and injuring 2,839 others; and

(7) 61 active shooter incidents led to over 100 deaths in 2021, a 52.5-percent increase from 2020, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

Whereas in an average year, at least 10,300 hate crimes involve a firearm every year, more than 28 every day, in the United States;

Whereas communities of color are disproportionately impacted by gun violence;

Whereas neighborhoods suffering from gun violence are the same areas that lack economic opportunity, adequate infrastructure, access to quality schools, and housing opportunities;

Whereas, every month, approximately 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner;

Whereas intimate partner violence is a serious public health problem and rates of severe physical violence and violence inflicted with a firearm, is predominantly experienced by women with male partners;

Whereas 92 percent of all women killed with guns in high-income countries in 2015 were from the United States;

Whereas 16 percent of gay and lesbian youth, 11 percent of bisexual youth, and 29 percent of transgender youth have been threatened with a weapon on school property, according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey;

Whereas, in 2016, the American Medical Association adopted policy calling gun violence in the United States “a public health crisis” requiring a comprehensive public health response and solution;

Whereas, in 2016, the American Medical Association’s president noted that “with approximately 30,000 men, women and children dying each year at the barrel of a gun in elementary schools, movie theaters, workplaces, houses of worship and on live television, the United States faces a public health crisis of gun violence”;

Whereas, in 2018, the American College of Physicians issued a position paper detailing how “firearm violence continues to be a public health crisis that requires the nation’s immediate attention”;

Whereas, in 2019, a study by Florida Atlantic University’s Schmidt College of Medicine found that more United States school-age children die from guns than on-duty United States police or global military fatalities;

Whereas the American Public Health Association finds that gun violence is a leading cause of premature death in the United States;

Whereas, in 2019, Black children and teens had the highest gun death rate, followed by American Indian and Alaska Native children and teens;

Whereas, in 2020, guns became the leading cause of death for children in the United States;

Whereas, in 2020, 10,197 children and young adults aged 0 to 24 died as a result of gun violence;

Whereas, in 2021, the Governor of New York declared gun violence a public health emergency;

Whereas, in 2021, the mayor of Washington, DC, declared gun violence to be a public health crisis and announced a “whole-government” approach to combating this crisis;

Whereas, in 2021, the Governor of Illinois declared gun violence a public health crisis;

Whereas, in January 2022, officials in Cincinnati, Ohio, declared gun violence a public health crisis;

Whereas, in February 2022, the mayor of Columbus, Ohio, declared gun violence a public health crisis;

Whereas, in June 2022, the Guilford County Commissioners in North Carolina declared gun violence a public health crisis;

Whereas a public health crisis is defined as meeting the following 4 criteria—

- (1) the condition affects many people, is seen as a threat to the public, and is continuing to increase;
- (2) the condition is distributed unfairly;
- (3) preventive measures could reduce the effects of the condition; and
- (4) those preventive measures are not yet in place;

Whereas gun violence meets the criteria of a public health crisis;

Whereas, in 1979, the Surgeon General identified violent behavior as a key public health priority;

Whereas, in 1992, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention established the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control as the lead Federal organization for violence prevention;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines a 4-step public health approach to violence prevention, rooted in the scientific method—

- (1) define and monitor the problem;
- (2) identify risk and protective factors;
- (3) develop and test prevention strategies; and
- (4) assure widespread adoption;

Whereas a Federal public health crisis declaration defines gun violence as a pervasive health issue and alerts the Nation of the need to enact immediate and effective cross-governmental efforts to prevent gun violence; and

Whereas such declaration requires the response of the Government to engage significant resources to empower those communities that are impacted: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) declares gun violence a public health crisis
3 in the United States;

4 (2) supports the resolutions drafted, introduced,
5 and adopted by cities, localities, and States across
6 the Nation declaring gun violence a public health
7 crisis or emergency;

8 (3) urges a coordinated whole-of-government ef-
9 fort to addressing the gun violence public health cri-
10 sis and ensuring the safety of all children;

11 (4) urges the Centers for Disease Control and
12 Prevention to continue its work utilizing the 4-step
13 public health approach to violence prevention and
14 collaborate with other Federal Government agencies
15 to resolve the gun violence public health crisis;

16 (5) urges the Centers for Disease Control and
17 Prevention to expand its research and data collection
18 capabilities pertaining to gun violence prevention;

19 (6) urges the Surgeon General to issue a report
20 on firearm injuries and violence prevention; and

- 1 (7) commits to ending the gun violence public
- 2 health crisis so that all people can enjoy life, liberty,
- 3 and the pursuit of happiness.

