

Resolution In Support of Local Solutions to End Gun Violence

WHEREAS, every day, 100 Americans are killed with guns and hundreds more are shot and injured; and

WHEREAS, one-third of gun deaths are homicides^[1] and the U.S. gun homicide rate is 25 times that of other high-income countries^[2]; and

WHEREAS, gun homicides and assaults are concentrated in cities, with one analysis finding that in 2015, half of all gun homicides in the U.S. took place in just 127 cities, which represent nearly a quarter of the population,^[3] and with 31 percent of gun murders occurring in the 50 cities with the highest murder rates, though only 6 percent of Americans live in these cities^[4]; and

WHEREAS, gun violence in the U.S. reflects and intensifies this country's long-standing racial inequities with gun homicides and assaults being concentrated in racially segregated neighborhoods that are marked by intense poverty and low levels of education^[5] ^[6]; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of slavery, segregation, and structural racism has caused Black Americans to experience higher rates of poverty, unemployment, incarceration, and racial residential segregation, and when concentrated, these disadvantages are strong predictors of violent crime^[7]; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans represent the majority of homicide and nonfatal shooting victims in the U.S.^[8] and are ten times more likely than white Americans to die by gun homicide^[9]; and

WHEREAS, Mayors, working together with law enforcement, community leaders, local gun violence prevention organizations, social service providers, researchers and advocates, are tirelessly leading the way to protect their residents from gun violence and increase public safety; and

WHEREAS, cities that have sustained success preventing gun violence have deployed multi-disciplinary, community-involved approaches to response and prevention; and

WHEREAS, Mayors continue to work with their state and federal representatives to introduce and support sensible gun laws such as requiring background checks on all gun sales, red flag laws,

domestic violence relinquishment laws, and funding bills that provide financial support for community-based violence prevention programs; and

WHEREAS, Mayors and City Councils are adopting local ordinances and challenging state preemption to promote gun safety in their cities such as using municipal purchasing, investing, and bond-issuing power to incentivize businesses large and small to adopt gun safety reforms, requiring background checks, ; and

WHEREAS, a successful local gun violence prevention strategy includes long-term prevention (such as crime prevention through environmental design and opportunities for youth), immediate intervention practices (such as violence interruption and focussed deterrence), and comprehensive victim and re-entry services (such as hospital-based violence interventions and robust re-entry programming); and

WHEREAS, victim services for gunshot survivors can help address the well-documented risks for re-victimization or retaliation after gun violence occurs and many cities fund and expand victims' services with funding secured through the Victims of Crime Act; and

WHEREAS, city leaders can work with local businesses in reducing neighborhood gun violence by encouraging in-kind contributions to community-based GVP practices, including participation in job readiness programs or donating space or equipment for after-school mentoring or sports programs; and

WHEREAS, residents of communities with disproportionately high levels of gun violence are working to prevent gun violence and are in need of support and resources to sustain, scale, evaluate and innovate their work.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the African American Mayors Association urges Mayors to reduce gun violence in their communities by:

1. Working with state and federal lawmakers to promote, pass, and implement common sense gun laws at every level of government; and
2. Executing both long-term and immediate actions to address gun violence where it occurs; and
3. Accessing funding to support services for gun violence survivors; and
4. Leveraging business and municipal purchasing power in the fight to end gun violence; and
5. Committing local resources to community-based gun violence reduction strategies.