GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC

EVIDENCE-BASED GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

A Uniquely American Epidemic

100 Americans are killed by gun violence every day, 36,000 each year (1). Nearly 2/3 of all gun deaths in the US are suicides, resulting in an average of 63 deaths a day (2). The firearm suicide rate for children & teens have increased 65% over the last 10 years (3). Men represent 86% of firearm suicide victims; white males 65 and over living in rural areas are at especially high risk (4).Americans face a truly unique public health crisis which merits immediate investigation and action. The recent developments around the coronavirus pandemic have the potential to exacerbate these alarming statistics. Firearm and ammunition sales have dramatically increased from this time last year as communities face uncertainty & fear (5).

The GVP & Community Safety Act

The gun violence epidemic has intersecting and overlapping causes, and so will require a multi-factorial solution. There are gaping holes in the current federal system of background checks for people trying to purchase firearms. Background checks are an effective way to keep guns away from those prohibited from having them, stopping over 3 million illegal sales since the Brady law was implemented in 1994. Over 90% of Americans support closing these holes including purchases without background checks at venues such as online markets, gun shows, and informal sales (6).

The Gun Violence Prevention and Community Safety Act of 2020 (H.R.5717/ S.3254) was introduced to the House of Representatives and Senate by Representative Henry "Hank" C. Johnson Jr. (D-GA) and Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). This bill includes universal background checks in addition to sweeping gun safety legislation such as:

- Creating a federal gun licensing system
- Enacting extreme risk protection orders
- Raising minimum age of gun purchases to 21
- Investing $100 million in annual funding for federal gun violence research and $100 million for gun violence intervention

As of March 24, 2020 the bill has 18 House & 3 Senate cosponsors.

1) https://lawcenter.giffords.org/facts/gun-violence-statistics/
2) https://everytownresearch.org/firearm-suicide/
3) https://everytownresearch.org/firearm-suicide/
4) https://everytownresearch.org/firearm-suicide/
5) https://bradyunited.org/key-statistics/
6) https://www.americanprogress.org/

Notes

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