

2016 Resolution No: 2

Submitted by: Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Boston, Massachusetts

Resolution Supporting Executive Action on Gun Violence Reduction

WHEREAS, the nation's mayors believe gun violence is one of the defining challenges of our time, devastating both children and adults, who experience trauma firsthand and carry with them the burden of devastation brought by gun violence throughout their life; and

WHEREAS, nearly 12,000 Americans are murdered with guns every year, a rate that is more than 20 times higher than that of other developed countries; and

WHEREAS, the nation's mayors believe that reducing gun violence and illegal gun trafficking must be accompanied with wraparound support systems that provide access and opportunity to life beyond the shadow of a gun; and

WHEREAS, a large number of people commit crimes when they knowingly attempt to purchase firearms using falsified information in an attempt to get around proper background checks, and unfortunately, few of these cases are referred to ATF field offices for investigation and prosecution, even though they may be quickly investigated by local law enforcement officers; and

WHEREAS, a solution to this growing problem is to ensure that any failed attempt to purchase a gun by a prohibited individual is promptly reported to the local law enforcement agency for a criminal investigation and shared with the individual's home law enforcement agency; and

WHEREAS, even in states that have strong gun laws meant to prevent firearms from falling into the hands of those that are prohibited from possessing them and those that intend to use firearms during the commission of a crime, illegal guns continue to be accessible to criminals due to the ease with which they can be purchased in jurisdictions with less stringent purchasing and possessing laws; and

WHEREAS, identifying and tracing all firearm and ballistic evidence that comes into the possession of a law enforcement agency, and reporting that identifying information to state and federal databases provides all law enforcement agencies the ability to identify the routes through which illegal firearms are trafficked from their point of purchase; and

WHEREAS, gun violence hits especially hard at victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence, with more than half of women killed by intimate partners or family members being killed with a gun; and

WHEREAS, although some measures exist at the state and federal levels to prevent convicted domestic abusers from purchasing firearms through licensed dealers, there are only a handful of states that require domestic abusers to relinquish firearms upon the issuance of a temporary restraining order against them, and strengthening such laws across the country could save countless lives; and

WHEREAS, the drug trade that is ravaging cities across the country is intimately connected with the illegal trafficking of firearms across state lines, allowing two deadly scourges to become even more dangerously intertwined, resulting in increased gun violence and greater availability of high quality, low cost narcotics; and

WHEREAS, because guns and drugs know no boundaries, forming regional groups of mayors, police chiefs and law enforcement officials, can help expedite the sharing of information and best practices, so that individual communities can rely on the collective expertise of their partners near and far, to reduce illegal gun trafficking between and within their cities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors thanks President Barack Obama and his Administration for taking executive action to address gun violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors encourages mayors and municipal officials to take executive actions of their own to combat gun violence and illegal use and trafficking of guns, by ensuring that all domestic violence and drug abuse prohibiting records are entered into the background check system, by issuing guidance to law enforcement officers to investigate and prosecute cases in which prohibited individuals attempt to purchase guns from licensed dealers and fail a background check, by making every effort to trace every piece of firearm and ballistic evidence that comes into the possession of law enforcement, by instructing law enforcement agencies to share trace data with their colleagues in law enforcement, and by taking every step possible within their authority as chief executives to reduce the flow of illegal firearms and reduce gun violence and gun homicides; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors encourages mayors to take executive action in their cities such as banning replica handguns that are made to look and feel like real handguns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors encourages mayors to engage with legal gun owners to ensure that they know the rules and regulations regarding lost and stolen firearms and that they take appropriate steps to ensure safe and secure storage of all firearms in their possession; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors encourages governors, attorneys general, and other executives at the state and county levels to take action and to join with mayors across the country in reducing the flow of illegal guns and putting an end to gun violence.

Projected Cost: Unknown