

WASHINGTON STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: C-15
(A-20)

Subject: Broaden the Mandate of the State Office for
Firearm Violence Prevention

Introduced by: Gregory Engel, MD, MPH, FAAFP, Delegate
Amish Dave, MD, MPH, Delegate
King County Medical Society

Referred to: Reference Committee C

1 WHEREAS, the Governor of Washington state recently signed into law SB 6288, a measure
2 establishing a State Office for Firearm Violence Prevention, the first such office in the nation
3 dedicated to reducing fatal and non-fatal firearm injuries; and

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5 WHEREAS, this law provides funding for research into firearm injuries in Washington state;
6 and

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8 WHEREAS, the coordinated and synergistic use of research, technology, media and legislation
9 is necessary to most effectively reduce firearm injuries; and

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11 WHEREAS, this law does not include support for the other proven public health tools that will
12 allow for the greatest reductions in fatal and nonfatal firearm injuries; and

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14 WHEREAS, successful media campaigns were used to reduce other significant public health
15 threats such as motor vehicle collisions, and similar campaigns are necessary to educate both the
16 public about important safety issues regarding firearms;^{1,2,3} and

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18 WHEREAS, media campaigns can be used to increase awareness of laws, such as those
19 regarding Extreme Risk Protection Orders and firearm storage; and

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21 WHEREAS, there is a current lack of public awareness of these laws which prevent them from
22 effectively deterring firearm deaths and injuries; and

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24 WHEREAS, the WSMA supports research to help us understand and reduce the multi-factorial
25 causes and consequences of firearm-related injury and death;⁴ and

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27 WHEREAS, the WSMA supports policy to address firearm-related violence and injury as a
28 public health issue;⁵ THEREFORE BE IT

29
30 RESOLVED, that the Washington State Medical Association supports broadening the mandate
31 of the existing Office for Firearm Violence Prevention. This may include:

- 32
- 33 • Increasing funding of the Washington State Office of Firearm Violence Prevention for
34 research, including research on the effects of firearm injury prevention laws and research
35 on barriers to the effectiveness of these laws, and
 - 36 • Creating a program within the Washington State Office of Firearm Violence Prevention
37 that focuses on using media to increase public awareness of information that relates to
38 firearm injuries and ways to reduce risk of fatal and nonfatal firearm injury.

39 (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: None

References

1. Dunlop SM, Romer D. Associations between adolescent seatbelt non-use, normative perceptions and screen media exposure: results from a national US survey. *Inj Prev.* 2010;16(5):315-320. doi:10.1136/ip.2009.025999
2. Roehler DR, Elliott MR, Quinlan KP, Zonfrillo MR. Factors Associated With Unrestrained Young Passengers in Motor Vehicle Crashes. *Pediatrics.* 2019;143(3):e20182507. doi:10.1542/peds.2018-2507
3. Hingson RW, Howland J, Levenson S. Effects of legislative reform to reduce drunken driving and alcohol-related traffic fatalities. *Public Health Rep.* 1988;103(6):659-667.
4. Washington State Medical Association Policy Compendium. "Reducing Firearm-Related Injury and Death, 2019 Updates"
https://wsma.org/WSMA/About/Policies/Whats_Our_Policy/Guns_And_Weapons/Reducing_Firearm_Related_Injury_And_Death_2019_Updates.aspx
5. Washington State Medical Association Policy Compendium. "Guns as Public Health Issue"
https://wsma.org/WSMA/About/Policies/Whats_Our_Policy/Guns_And_Weapons/Guns_As_Public_Health_Issue.aspx

WSMA Policy

Background Checks and Waiting Periods

The WSMA supports criminal background checks for all firearm sales and transfers of ownership, with permissible exceptions, (e.g. gifts between immediate family members, antiques, and loans for lawful hunting or sporting activities.) (Res C-6, A-13) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports policy that provides for background checks and waiting periods for the purchase of firearms. (Res C-12, A-18)

Children

The WSMA supports restricting child access to firearms through safe storage and child access prevention laws. (Res C-3, A-12) (Reaffirmed A-19)

Development of Firearm Safety Policies

The WSMA support policy encouraging the Washington State Legislature to address firearm injury and deaths based on proven public-health practices, employing sound research to understand causes, direct interventions, and study the effects of those interventions. (Res C-21, A-19)

Extreme Risk Protection Orders

The WSMA supports the concept of Extreme Risk Protection Orders, which allow families and law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily suspend a person's access to firearms if there is documented evidence that an individual is threatening harm to themselves or others because of dangerous mental illness or at high risk of violent behavior. (Res C-6, A-16) (Reaffirmed A-19)

Gun Control

The WSMA endorses national and state legislation to ban the domestic manufacture, sale, possession and importation of any polymer plastic handguns or other firearms determined to be able to escape detection by standard airport security. (Reaffirmed A-17) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports appropriate legislation that would restrict the sale and private ownership of large clip, high-rate-of-fire automatic and semi-automatic firearms, or any weapon that is modified or redesigned to operate as a large clip, high-rate-of-fire automatic or semi-automatic weapon. (Res 29, C-87; Res 22, C-90) (Reaffirmed A-17) (Reaffirmed A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports closing loopholes in gun purchases online and at unregulated gun shows. (Res C-9, A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports measures to reduce gun violence. (Res C-9, A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports policy that raises the minimum age to purchase a firearm to 21 years of age. (Res C-14) (Reaffirmed A-19)

Gun Safety Education

The WSMA encourages incorporating questions about firearms in and outside the home when documenting social history in the medical record. (Res C-7, A-13) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports encouraging physicians and health care workers to discuss safe storage of guns and the association of guns with risk of homicide, accidental shooting, and suicide, and counsel about risk. (Res C-9, A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA supports the elimination of laws intruding on physicians' and patients' rights to discuss gun violence. (Res C-9, A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

The WSMA encourages its members to screen for risk factors of firearm injury and educate patients about prevention and safe storage. (Res C-15, A-18) (Reaffirmed A-19)

Guns as Public Health Issue

The WSMA supports policy to address firearm-related violence and injury as a public health issue. (Res C-11, A-18)

Reducing Firearm-Related Injury and Death, 2019 Updates

The WSMA support research to help us understand and reduce the multi-factorial causes and consequences of firearm-related injury and death. (Res C-23, A-19)

The WSMA support improved access to mental health care, while cautioning against broadly including all individuals with a mental health or substance use disorder in a category of individuals prohibited from purchasing firearms. (Res C-23, A-19)

The WSMA support policy that would prohibit those guilty of violence against a family member or intimate partner—including dating partners, cohabitants, stalkers, and those who victimize any family member—from purchasing or possessing firearms. (Res C-23, A-19)

Safe Storage

The WSMA supports policy that will encourage and promote the safe storage of firearms in homes where those firearms are kept. (Res C-13, A-18)

Trauma Prevention

The WSMA supports working with the Washington Chapter of the American College of Surgeons to enact safe and sane legislation relating to the purchase of firearms to include:

1. Firearm education and safety certification prior to purchase;
2. Licensure appropriate to the class of firearm desired for purchase; and

3. Establishment of an appropriate waiting period between application for purchase and/or licensure and purchase of the firearm.

Weapons-free Zones for Health Care Facilities

The WSMA supports policy that creates weapons-free zones for medical practice settings, allowing exceptions for law enforcement. (Res C-9, A-18)