

By: Blanco

S.C.R. No. 8

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Gun violence in America is the leading cause of
2 death among children and teens and the 13th leading cause of death
3 among all ages; and

4 WHEREAS, Each year, more than 39,000 people in the United
5 States die as a result of gun violence, or about 109 every day,
6 according to the Centers for Disease Control National Center for
7 Injury Prevention and Control; tens of thousands more suffer gun
8 injuries that are nonfatal but too often prove life-changing; and

9 WHEREAS, In Texas, someone is killed with a gun every three
10 hours, and guns are the state's third-leading cause of death for
11 children aged 1 to 17; guns make domestic violence incidents far
12 more likely to end in fatalities, and more than 60 percent of
13 intimate partner homicides involve a firearm; and

14 WHEREAS, Guns are a significant danger to Texans suffering
15 from suicidal ideation; 60 percent of all suicides involve
16 firearms, and the percentage is even higher for veterans who commit
17 suicide; tragically, attempts of suicide by firearm in this country
18 result in death 85 percent of the time, compared to just three
19 percent for other methods, such as drug overdose; the vast majority
20 of people who survive an attempted suicide do not try again; and

21 WHEREAS, Capable of inflicting serious or deadly injuries on
22 many people in a short time, firearms have vast potential to amplify
23 violence; the nation saw 418 mass shootings in 2019 alone,
24 resulting in the deaths of more than 460 people and injury to over

1 1,700; Texas has witnessed numerous such incidents in recent years,
2 including the 2017 Sutherland Springs church shooting, which
3 claimed 26 lives and left 20 people wounded; the next year, a
4 17-year-old student killed 10 and injured 10 at Santa Fe High
5 School; 2019 brought even more devastation; in early August, a
6 gunman murdered 23 and wounded a further 23 at an El Paso Walmart,
7 and before the month was out, another shooter went on a rampage in
8 Midland-Odessa, murdering seven and injuring 25; and

9 WHEREAS, People who survive a firearm-related injury may
10 experience severe long-term consequences, ranging from paralysis
11 and other physical disabilities to problems with memory, thinking,
12 and emotions, as well as chronic mental health conditions such as
13 post-traumatic stress disorder; the effects of firearm violence
14 extend beyond victims and their families, and mass shooting
15 incidents can affect the sense of safety and security of entire
16 communities and impact everyday decisions; the National Center for
17 PTSD estimates that 28 percent of people who have witnessed a mass
18 shooting develop the illness, while about a third develop acute
19 stress disorder; incidents of mass violence have an enormous
20 behavioral health impact on most people, whether they are
21 survivors, witnesses, or exposed through mass media; moreover,
22 active shooter drills in schools, implemented widely in response to
23 mass shootings, are associated with increases in depression,
24 stress, anxiety, and physiological problems among students, their
25 teachers, and their parents; and

26 WHEREAS, The economic impact of firearm violence is
27 substantial as well; in 2015 alone, it cost the U.S. \$229 billion;

1 gun violence imposes myriad burdens on society, including work
2 loss, medical and mental health care, emergency transportation,
3 police and criminal justice activities, insurance claims
4 processing, employer costs, and decreased quality of life; and

5 WHEREAS, Gun violence is not inevitable, as shown by other
6 wealthy nations with gun homicide rates vastly lower than ours; the
7 United States has a deeply rooted culture of gun violence that has
8 not received the same sustained, data-driven attention and
9 government investment as other public health problems, including
10 motor vehicle accidents and HIV/AIDS; in addressing those threats,
11 scientific research informed a comprehensive public health
12 response that dramatically shifted their trajectory; and

13 WHEREAS, The size, complexity, and grave social and economic
14 consequences of the gun violence epidemic demand a similarly
15 comprehensive, science-based approach; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas
17 hereby declare gun violence a public health crisis.