

South Bend Gun Violence Prevention Resolution 2017

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOUTH BEND, INDIANA, URGING THE INDIANA STATE LEGISLATURE, OUR GOVERNOR AND ALL UNITED STATES SENATE AND CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLES OF INDIANA TO JOIN WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND PASS LEGISLATION TO KEEP GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF VIOLENT CRIMINALS, DOMESTIC ABUSERS AND SEVERELY MENTALLY ILL PERSONS BY CLOSING THE LOOPHOLES IN THE FEDERAL BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM AND STRENGTHENING STATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAWS.

Whereas, after a rash of gun violence in 2014, 2015 and 2016 our city is determined to do all it can to end this violence. But we do not live in a vacuum. It is clear that the easy availability of firearms to criminals is an important factor, so we look to our broader community of lawmakers to do their part as well to help South Bend curb the gun violence gripping our city.

Whereas, the city of South Bend feels that it can protect the lives of its citizens and at the same time protect gun owners' Second Amendment rights.

Whereas, to date, background checks have blocked over 2.3 million gun sales to prohibited people, with 88,203 of those occurring in 2013 alone, according to the F.B.I. Unfortunately, millions of firearms are sold in unlicensed sales, including anonymous transfers between strangers at gun shows and online.

Whereas, Indiana does not require private sellers (sellers who are not federally-licensed dealers) to initiate a background check before transferring a firearm.

Whereas, Indiana has a high rate of gun purchases that are unregulated by existing laws, which results in more illegal guns on our streets and more gun trafficking to other states. In addition, the prohibition on sales to those with severe mental illnesses is not properly enforced, and Indiana's rate of submission of mental health records is little more than one-eighth of the national average.

Whereas, some of our lawmakers argue that we do not need any new laws, that we should fix our existing laws before creating any new ones. We feel that our Indiana leaders have a responsibility to make our community safer by making all firearms subject to background checks at the point of sale, so that felons and those with severe mental illnesses are barred from possessing guns.

Whereas, we believe Indiana can be a good example and do the right thing. As a model, we ask our leaders to consider the bi-partisan Manchin-Toomey Senate bill, or the Thomson-King House bill, both of which close the gun show and internet sales loopholes

in the federal background check system. Indiana's U.S. senators and representatives should co-sponsor and vote for these bills in their respective chambers.

Whereas, we ask our Indiana State legislators to craft legislation to close these loopholes in the federal background check system as implemented in Indiana, in light of the present inability of our federal legislators to support these bipartisan bills.

Whereas, we also ask our Governor to support and sign into law such legislation. 89% of Hoosier citizens (insert citation) and 74% of the NRA's own members support background checks. The citizens of Indiana deserve safer communities in which to live and work.

Whereas, we ask our elected officials in the Hoosier state to strengthen state laws to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. Domestic violence often involves firearms, and when it does women and children are more likely to die or suffer severe injury. Many states have passed their own laws prohibiting domestic abusers from owning or purchasing firearms. We ask our state representatives to pass laws protecting those who suffer domestic violence, and our congressional representatives to vote for bills like Senator Klobuchar's (D-MN) Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act of 2013 (S.1290), which would close the loopholes in federal law that allow certain domestic abusers and stalkers to possess guns.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Common Council of the City of South Bend, Indiana, as follows:

We in South Bend invite our Indiana lawmakers and representatives to an honest dialogue about the solutions that are available to those who are willing to work together, cross party lines, and do what is right to protect our citizens from gun violence. We ask them to sit down with our South Bend officials, civic leaders and survivors of gun violence and see what they are willing to do to strengthen our gun laws and at the same time protect our Second Amendment rights.

