

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City is committed to the safety, health, and welfare of all of its residents; and

WHEREAS, ensuring the safety of Austin residents, public safety officers, and visitors is a top City priority; and

WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that gun violence in the United States is at epidemic levels, claiming over 30,000 lives annually; and

WHEREAS, the epidemic of gun violence includes horrific events such as mass shootings, intimate partner and domestic violence, suicides, homicides, accidental firearm discharge; and

WHEREAS, in April 2021, Austin Police Department Interim Chief Joe Chacon announced a new initiative to combat local gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department has reported an increase in gun violence and cited that many of the firearms used in these crimes were obtained illegally; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, in 2011, firearms were the number one cause of death for police officers killed in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, during the 116th and the 117th Congress, House Resolution 8 (H.R. 8) was approved on a bipartisan basis in the United States House of Representatives to require background checks for all commercial gun sales; and

23 **WHEREAS**, approval of H.R. 8, marked the first time major gun safety
24 legislation has passed the United States House of Representatives in more than
25 twenty years; and

26 **WHEREAS**, since H.R. 8 was passed by the United States House of
27 Representatives, in the 116th and the 117th Congress, the United States Senate has
28 not debated or voted on this important legislation; and

29 **WHEREAS**, in addition to the daily scourge of gun violence, Texas has
30 suffered numerous mass acts of gun violence including on August 3, 2019, in El
31 Paso, Texas where ~~230~~ individuals ~~are reported to have been~~were killed by a
32 shooter who ~~allegedly, according to initial reports,~~ uploaded an online manifesto
33 describing a so-called "Hispanic invasion of Texas," and referencing inspiration
34 from the attack on mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand that left 51 dead; and

35 **WHEREAS**, after the May 18, 2018, shooting at Santa Fe High School, in
36 Santa Fe, Texas, where 10 people were killed and 13 injured, Texas Governor
37 Greg Abbott met with superintendents, administrators, law enforcement officials,
38 as well as survivors of gun violence, to discuss policies that could increase the
39 safety of schools and communities while preserving Second Amendment rights;
40 and

41 **WHEREAS**, on May 30, 2018, Texas Governor Greg Abbott released a
42 School and Firearm Safety Action Plan, which included a recommendation
43 encouraging the Texas Senate and House leaders to consider the merits of adopting
44 a red flag law or "extreme risk protective orders" allowing law enforcement, a
45 family member, a school employee, or a district attorney to file a petition seeking
46 the removal of firearms from a potentially dangerous person only after legal due
47 process is provided; and

48 **WHEREAS**, Texas Governor Greg Abbott's School and Firearm Safety
49 Action Plan described the so called "red flag laws" as a proposal which could have
50 been used to prevent the shootings at Sutherland Springs and at Marjory Stoneman
51 Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida; and

52 **WHEREAS**, on average over 3,350 gun-related deaths occur in Texas each
53 year; and

54 **WHEREAS**, in October of 2019, Everytown for Gun Safety, the country's
55 largest gun violence prevention organization, released the report, "Guns and
56 Intimate Partner Violence: America's Uniquely Lethal Intimate Partner Violence
57 Problem," and found that in at least 54 percent of mass shootings, the perpetrator
58 shot a current or former intimate partner or family member; and

59 **WHEREAS**, the report also found that between 2009 and 2018, 80 percent
60 of child victims of mass shootings died in incidents connected to domestic or
61 family violence; and

62 **WHEREAS**, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 2019 report,
63 "Uniform Crime Reporting Program: Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR)
64 2014-2018," every month, an average of 53 women are shot and killed by an
65 intimate partner, and nearly 1 million women alive today have reported being shot
66 or shot at by intimate partners; and

67 **WHEREAS**, during the 86th Legislative Session and the 87th Legislative
68 Session, the Texas House and Senate did not approve important gun safety
69 legislation consistent with Texas Governor Greg Abbott's 2018 School and
70 Firearm Safety Action Plan; and

71 **WHEREAS**, local organizations, including Texas Gun Sense and local
72 chapters of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, have advocated at
73 the Texas Legislature for sensible gun safety legislation; and

74 **WHEREAS**, the 86th Texas Legislature adjourned without taking sufficient
75 action to reduce the risk of gun violence in our schools and communities; and

76 **WHEREAS**, during the 87th Texas Legislature, the Texas House approved
77 HB_1927 which would eliminate the requirement for Texans to get a license to
78 carry a firearm if they are not already prohibited by state or federal law from
79 possessing a firearm; and

80 **WHEREAS**, City Council has taken extensive action to address the
81 epidemic of gun violence including Resolution No. 20130228-035 signifying City
82 Council's intent to endorse efforts to develop a comprehensive approach to
83 reducing gun crime as well as Resolution Nos. 20161215-064, 20171207-054,
84 20180510-047, 20190808-149, and 20190822-069; and

85 **WHEREAS**, Austin has continued to experience the daily toll of gun
86 violence, including events such as the January 27th, 2021, fatal shooting of a local
87 pediatrician, the non-fatal shooting involving a law enforcement officer on April
88 9th, 2021, and the fatal shooting of three Austinites on April 18th, 2021;~~;~~~~and~~

89 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

90 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

91 City Council implores the state and federal governments to immediately take
92 emergency action to end gun violence and address the associated public health and
93 public safety crisis; and

94 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

95 City Council calls on Texas Governor Greg Abbott to immediately call on the
96 Texas Legislature to advance proposals included in Governor Abbott's own 2018
97 School and Firearm Safety Action Plan; and

98 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

99 City Council calls on the Texas Senate to protect and preserve our existing
00 statewide requirements to require a license to carry a handgun; and

01 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

02 City Council calls on the United States Senate to immediately begin debate and
03 deliberation on H.R. 8 and other meaningful gun safety legislation that has been
04 approved by the United States House of Representatives and remains languishing
05 in the Senate; and

06 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

07 City Council directs the City Manager to send a copy of this Resolution to the
08 Texas delegation of the United States Congress and to the White House; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

City Council directs the City Manager to send a copy of Governor Abbott's School and Firearm Safety Action Plan along with a copy of this Resolution to the Travis, Williamson and Hays County delegation of the Texas House and Senate, the Texas Governor, the Texas Lieutenant Governor, and to the Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

ADOPTED: _____, 2021 **ATTEST:** _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk