

## **Gun Violence in America**

### **Background:**

It is indisputable that—by whatever measure or standard—our country is the gun violence leader of the planet. The “Global Burden of Disease Study” found that the U.S. had a rate of 3.5 gun homicides per 100,000 of population, compared with one-seventh of that rate (or less) in peer countries. Violence perpetuated by the use of guns has become ingrained in the American culture, and is progressively undermining the very fabric of civility in America. Addressing this social malady is an absolute imperative. Technology—specifically, research and development (R&D)—may be the last best hope to curb this menace to the humaneness of our society.

Existing legislation (or the absence thereof) has precluded or stymied the sorely needed R&D to deal effectively with hand gun safety. Congress has expressly prohibited the Centers for Disease Control from studying gun violence. Abandoning R&D on hand gun safety is tantamount to curtailing or declaring a moratorium on cancer, heart disease or Alzheimer research.

The application of current and leading-edge technology to the problem of hand gun safety is the most expedient manner of addressing this clear and present danger to our society without contesting Second Amendment rights under the U.S. Constitution.

**Therefore, be it Resolved that** the 2017 Eighth District Democratic Convention urges:

1. The Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, through his Council and Office on Technology, to encourage, facilitate and incentivize the world-class technology enterprises of Virginia to pave the way in developing and marketing ground-breaking and affordable technology applications to gun safety issues,
2. The Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia to promote, fund and incentivize the academic institutions of Virginia to participate in a “Manhattan Project” type of collaborative effort to lead the nation in developing low-cost and readily accessible personalized and other safety devices for hand guns, with particular emphasis on child safety and safety in the home,
3. The Virginia General Assembly to empower localities to enact ordinances to prohibit guns in government facilities and in establishments serving alcohol,
4. The Congress of the U.S. to promote, authorize, aggressively fund and incentivize programs and projects that will result in the immediate availability of personalized safety devices for hand guns,
5. The Federal government (through appropriate agencies) to fund studies and collect statistics on the nature and extent of gun violence in the United States,

6. National, state and local elected officials to place a very high priority on oversight of the sale and distribution of guns, especially those having little or no value for sport, recreation, collection or other socially non-violent purposes, and
7. Democrats at every level to focus their energies and support on political candidates who espouse the sense and intent of this resolution on gun violence and safety.
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