

BEFORE THE BOARD OF HEALTH
SPOKANE REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT

RESOLUTION # 13-02

RE: CALLING ON LAWMAKERS TO TAKE MEANINGFUL ACTION TO ADDRESS GUN-RELATED INJURIES.

WHEREAS, injury caused by firearms is one of the leading causes of premature death in the United States, and

WHEREAS, the number of Americans who die each year from gun-related injuries (which was 31,672 in 2010) exceeds the number of babies who die each year during their first year of life (which is ~25,000), or people who die from AIDS (which is ~9,000), or people who die from illicit drugs (which is ~17,000), and

WHEREAS, lawmakers pass protective measures for other threats to the public's health, such as seat belt and impaired driving laws, childhood vaccinations and regulations around the safety of our drinking water, food and other products, and

WHEREAS, from 2007 to 2011, there were 2,971 Washington state residents who died as a result of gun-related injuries, and

WHEREAS, from 2007 to 2011, there were 231 Spokane County residents who died as a result of gun-related injuries and an additional 89 residents were hospitalized due to nonfatal firearm injuries, and

WHEREAS, of the Spokane County gun deaths from 2007 to 2011, there were 27 homicides, and 188 were self-inflicted, and

WHEREAS, suicide accounts for the greatest number of gun-related deaths in the United States and in Spokane County, and

WHEREAS, state safe-storage laws intended to prevent child access to guns have reduced unintentional firearm-related deaths among children ages 14 and under by an average of 23 percent.

WHEREAS, mass shooting events in the United States continue to occur, such as the 2012 massacres in Tucson, Arizona; Aurora, Colorado; and Newtown, Connecticut; and in neighboring Seattle last June, and

WHEREAS, other countries have a much lower gun-related mortality rate; the United States homicide rate is 30 times higher than that of Australia, France or the United Kingdom, and

WHEREAS, there are known strategies to reduce gun-related injuries that our lawmakers can explore, and

WHEREAS, mental health services must also be a priority to reduce both suicide and homicide rates;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Spokane Regional Health District's Board of Health:

- A. Calls on federal lawmakers to take meaningful action to address gun-related injuries; and
- B. Calls on state lawmakers to assure adequate funding for and full access to mental health services, including preventive and early intervention services and comprehensive treatment; and
- C. Calls on the state lawmakers to endorse the strict enforcement of existing gun laws.

Signed this 28th day of March 2013 in Spokane, Washington.

SPOKANE REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF HEALTH

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Board Member



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