City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

File #: 171066, **Version:** 0

Supporting enactment of PA Senate Bill 501, a bipartisan effort to enhance protections for domestic violence victims by tightening restrictions on gun possession for persons subject to protective orders.

WHEREAS, More than one in three American women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. More than a million American women are physically assaulted by a domestic partner every year; and

WHEREAS, An American woman is fatally shot by her partner every 16 hours. Domestic violence results in at least 2,000 deaths each year in the United States and more than half of the these “intimate partner” homicides are carried out with a gun. Women in the US are 11 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than women in other countries; and

WHEREAS, 70 percent of women killed by their partners had been abused by that same person prior to their deaths; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 75 percent of the victims in domestic violence shootings are the current wives or girlfriends of the men who killed them; and

WHEREAS, Abused women are five times more likely to be killed by their abuser if the abuser has access to a gun. Domestic violence assaults involving a gun are 12 times more likely to result in a death than those involving other weapons or bodily force; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the increased risk of fatal violence, domestic abusers often use guns to threaten and terrorize victims into staying in the abusive relationship, even in instances where they don’t end up pulling the trigger; and

WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania in 2011, 36,390 temporary protective orders were granted and 15,120 final orders were granted. Of those, 6,274 were granted after a hearing before a judge and 8,846 were by agreement between the parties. In the same year, 112 of Pennsylvania’s 168 domestic violence fatalities involved guns; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 501 is a bipartisan effort to strengthen current law by removing third-party safekeeping as an option for defendants ordered by the Court to relinquish firearms, weapons and ammunition, and also requires convicted domestic abusers to surrender those items within 24 hours upon conviction of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, instead of 60 days; and

WHEREAS, We on this Council recognize the additional dangers posed by firearm possession in situations of domestic violence and strongly support efforts to protect victims of domestic violence; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, The Council hereby supports enactment of Senate Bill 501 and commends the bipartisan co-sponsors of the bill for their efforts to enhance protections for domestic violence victims by tightening restrictions on gun possession for persons subject to

protective orders.

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