



## Legislation Text

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Calling on President Joseph R. Biden Jr. and the 117th United States Congress to immediately implement President Biden's plan to end the gun violence epidemic in cities and begin to appropriate the \$900 million in funds President Biden pledged to cities with the highest rates of homicides.

WHEREAS, Around 40,000 Americans die from gun violence every single year. There were 43,000 gun violence deaths in 2020, including over 24,000 suicides. The United States suffered 611 mass shootings in 2020 alone; and

WHEREAS, Decades of intentional federal disinvestment in Black urban communities and state and federal gun law preemption, have contributed to the current gun violence epidemic; and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 epidemic, death by suicide has increased, with half of all deaths by suicides occurring via a firearm. Access to guns directly increases the likelihood of someone killing themselves; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has suffered disproportionately from gun violence. People are shot on an almost daily basis. In 2020, three children were shot per week, on average, in the City. Between 2007 and 2019 there were 17,293 shooting victims in Philadelphia, with over 1,000 shootings each year. One hospital reported treating 1,800 child victims of gun violence between 2007 and 2016. The reoccurring trauma is immense and constant. The impact of gun violence ripples out, impacting everything from the ability of children to focus on schoolwork and enjoy their local playgrounds, to the ability for local businesses to thrive; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia saw a 40% increase in homicides and a 65% increase in the number of shooting victims in 2020, taking gun violence to a new level of emergency; and

WHEREAS, President Joseph R. Biden Jr. campaigned on an ambitious plan to end the nationwide gun violence epidemic, including in Black and brown communities. He pledged, among other things, to "create a \$900 million, eight-year initiative to fund...evidence-based interventions in 40 cities across the country - the 20 cities with the highest number of homicides, and 20 cities with the highest number of homicides per capita." This funding would save a tremendous number of lives and would save the country \$125.5 billion over the next eight years; and

WHEREAS, Given the rate of homicides in Philadelphia, the City would receive funding from this initiative in 2021. These resources could fund the expansion of existing, evidence-based gun violence prevention programs such as Group Violence Intervention, Community Crisis Intervention Program, and Youth Violence Reduction Partnership; and

WHEREAS, President Biden's plan calls for reforming federal programs that serve communities affected by violence to address trauma, increasing federal funding for trauma-informed and culturally responsive care, and creating a network of trauma care centers for survivors of violence; and

WHEREAS, Over time, racially discriminatory federal policy and intentional underinvestment in Black and brown communities has contributed to the gun violence epidemic in cities such as Philadelphia. Therefore, we urge President Biden and the United States Congress to prioritize the parts of his plan that aim to end the current gun violence emergency in Black and brown communities; and

WHEREAS, We applaud President Biden's previous actions on gun violence, including requiring federal background checks and a 10-year ban on assault weapons. We also applaud his numerous accomplishments during his first month in office during an unprecedented health, economic, and social crisis. Since his inauguration, however, there have already been hundreds of deaths from the gun violence epidemic. It is time to implement President Biden's plan to end the gun violence epidemic, to devote additional federal funds towards addressing this crisis, and to prioritize the portions of President Biden's plan that aim to end the current gun violence emergency in Black and brown communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls on President Joseph R. Biden Jr. and the 117th United States Congress to immediately implement President Biden's plan to end the gun violence epidemic in cities and begin to appropriate the \$900 million in funds President Biden pledged to cities with the highest rates of homicides.