



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 49

Resolution calling upon the New York City Department of Education to include age-appropriate gun violence prevention curriculum in all schools.

By Council Members Cumbo, the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams), Gibson, Cabrera, Powers and Maisel

Whereas, Gun violence in the United States is at epidemic levels and is increasing; and

Whereas, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2015, the latest year for which data is available, there were 33,252 deaths attributed to firearms in the U.S., up from 28,663 in 2000; and

Whereas, However, deaths from firearms are only part of the picture, as many other people are fortunate to survive gunshot wounds; and

Whereas, According to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, each year, on average, 114,994 people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention and 33,880 of them die; and

Whereas, Of this annual average number of people shot in America, 17,012 are children and teenagers ages 0-19 and 2,647 of them die according to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence; and

Whereas, Further, American children 5-14 years old are 17 times more likely to be murdered by a firearm, 10 times more likely to die by suicide, and 9 times more likely to die from unintentional firearm injury than children in other industrialized countries, according to Doctors for America; and

Whereas, Besides being a serious public safety issue, there is a growing consensus among the nations' top medical organizations that gun violence is a public health crisis; and

Whereas, Efforts in the areas of drug and alcohol abuse prevention have demonstrated that preventive

education can reduce the risks for youth; and

Whereas, Under New York State Law and the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, all schools under the jurisdiction of the State Education Department must provide a program of health and physical education including health and safety education; and

Whereas, However, neither the New York State Education Department (NYSED) nor the New York City Department of Education (DOE) currently requires instruction in gun violence prevention as part of the health education curriculum; and

Whereas, The DOE recommended health curricula for Middle and High Schools, called HealthSmart, does contain lessons on “Safety & Injury Prevention” that, according to the publisher, include “discussion of how the presence of guns or other weapons increases the risk of violent injury”; and

Whereas, However, it is unclear whether such “discussion” about guns is extensive enough to be considered gun violence prevention curriculum; and

Whereas, Further, the DOE recommends but does not require all schools to use the HealthSmart curricula, instead requiring schools that choose not to use the curricula to select a curricula meeting NYSED health education requirements ; and

Whereas, Protecting our children and youth from the scourge of gun violence is too important to regard as optional; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York City Department of Education to include age-appropriate gun violence prevention curriculum in all schools.

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JA
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