

SENATE BILL 1773

By Gilmore

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 38; Title 39; Title 49; Title 50; Title 68 and Title 71, relative to gun violence.

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the General Assembly through this act to:

- (1) Strengthen public health data reporting and collection;
- (2) Improve access to prevention, treatment, and recovery support services;
- (3) Reduce the availability and distribution of firearms;
- (4) Support research on trauma; and
- (5) Advance the practice of gun safety; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, is amended by adding the following as a new chapter:

4-36-101.

(a) The department of health shall submit to the legislature and each municipality and county of the state, an annual report on the public health impacts of gun violence on local communities. The report must include data on the deaths, disabilities, mental illnesses, and economic hardships stemming from gun violence. Additionally, the report must provide the public and policymakers with research-based information from which to make informed decisions on how best to protect Tennesseans from gun violence.

(b) Each law enforcement agency in the state shall provide the department of health biannually with incident-level data on shootings that occur within the agency's jurisdiction in order to identify and track hotspots and direct resources where needed.

4-36-102.

By January 1, 2023, the state must act to reduce gun violence in youth under eighteen (18) years of age in the following ways:

(1) The department of labor and workforce development is encouraged to create a youth employment program that includes training on the skills needed for employment, including nonviolent conflict resolution;

(2) The department of health is encouraged to create a new hospital-based violence intervention program to be implemented in hotspot communities within each municipality or county, which includes participation by local constituent groups. The program must include street outreach workers to respond to shooting victims directly, connect victims and their families to wrap-around support services, and de-escalate conflicts and retaliation;

(3) The department of safety shall develop a firearm buyback program in collaboration with local community groups. Compensation for firearms that are voluntarily surrendered may be paid in cash or other items of value such as grocery vouchers, tickets to professional sporting events, and phone cards, as determined by the local community groups. Any firearm that is voluntarily surrendered through the buyback program shall be destroyed;

(4) To ensure optimal safety for children who live in homes with firearms, the department of health shall provide a gun safety program to be distributed through hospital emergency departments and primary care centers. The gun safety program must enable healthcare providers to have non-judgmental conversations with families about firearms kept in the home and, if appropriate, offer educational resources and firearm safety devices to such families at no cost; and

(5) The department of education shall develop a program for children enrolled in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools, to teach the students strategies and nonviolent methods to resolve conflict in collaboration with community organizations.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect July 1, 2022, the public welfare requiring it.