

SENATE BILL 17

By Lamar

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4 and Title 39, 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) Support research on trauma; and
- (4) 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 to 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) The Tennessee bureau of investigation shall provide the department of health biannually with incident-level data on gun-related crime that occurs within this state in order to identify and track areas with the highest per capita gun violence and direct resources where needed.

(c) By January 1, 2024, 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 areas with the highest per capita gun violence within each municipality or county, which includes participation by local constituent groups;

(3) To ensure optimal safety for children who live in homes with firearms, the department of health may 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

(4) 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, 2023, the public welfare requiring it.