
SENATE BILL 6288

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Dhingra, Pedersen, Frockt, Carlyle, Wilson, C., Kuderer, and Das

1 AN ACT Relating to the Washington office of firearm violence
2 prevention; adding a new chapter to Title 43 RCW; and creating a new
3 section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that firearm
6 violence is a significant public health and safety concern in
7 Washington. From 2014 to 2018, over one thousand people in Washington
8 were murdered and well over half of those victims were murdered with
9 a gun. Thousands more were hospitalized or treated in emergency
10 departments after surviving gunshot injuries. The legislature
11 recognizes that firearm violence in Washington disproportionately
12 impacts low-income communities and communities of color, with young
13 men of color being particularly vulnerable. This violence imposes a
14 high physical, emotional, and financial toll on families and
15 communities across the state. In Washington, the overall estimate of
16 the annual economic cost of gun violence is three billion eight
17 hundred million dollars.

18 The legislature intends to establish the Washington office of
19 firearm violence prevention to provide statewide leadership,
20 coordination, and technical assistance to promote effective state and
21 local efforts to reduce preventable injuries and deaths from firearm

1 violence. The office will work with government entities, law
2 enforcement agencies, community-based organizations, and individuals
3 through the state to develop evidence-based policies, strategies, and
4 interventions to reduce the impacts of firearm violence in
5 Washington's communities. The office will also administer the
6 Washington firearm violence intervention and prevention grant program
7 which will provide for intentional, coordinated, and sustained
8 investments in evidence-based violence reduction strategies to reduce
9 the human and financial costs of firearm violence.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
11 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
12 otherwise.

13 (1) "Department" means the department of commerce.

14 (2) "Office" means the Washington office of firearm violence
15 prevention.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Washington office of firearm
17 violence prevention is created within the department for the purposes
18 of coordinating and promoting effective state and local efforts to
19 reduce firearm violence.

20 (2) The duties of the office include, but are not limited to:

21 (a) Working with law enforcement agencies, county prosecutors,
22 and public health agencies throughout the state to identify and
23 improve upon available data sources, data collection methods, and
24 data-sharing mechanisms. The office will also identify gaps in
25 available data needed for ongoing analysis, policy development, and
26 the implementation of evidence-based firearm violence intervention
27 and prevention strategies;

28 (b) Researching, identifying, and recommending legislative policy
29 options to promote the implementation of statewide evidence-based
30 firearm violence intervention and prevention strategies;

31 (c) Researching, identifying, and applying for nonstate funding
32 to aid in the research, analysis, and implementation of statewide
33 firearm violence intervention and prevention strategies;

34 (d) Working with the office of crime victim advocacy to identify
35 opportunities to better support victims of firearm violence, a
36 population that is currently underrepresented among recipients of
37 victim services;

1 (e) Administering the Washington firearm violence intervention
2 and prevention grant program as outlined in section 4 of this act.

3 (3) The office shall report to the appropriate legislative policy
4 committees by December 1st every odd-numbered year on its progress
5 and findings in analyzing data, developing strategies to prevent
6 firearm violence, and recommendations for additional legislative
7 policy options. The first report must be submitted by December 1,
8 2021.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The Washington firearm violence
10 intervention and prevention grant program is created to be
11 administered by the office. The purpose of the program is to improve
12 public health and safety by supporting effective firearm violence
13 reduction initiatives in communities that are disproportionately
14 affected by firearm violence.

15 (2) Program grants shall be used to support, expand, and
16 replicate evidence-based violence reduction initiatives, including
17 hospital-based violence intervention programs, evidence-based street
18 outreach programs, and focused deterrence strategies, that seek to
19 interrupt the cycles of violence, victimization, and retaliation in
20 order to reduce the incidence of firearm violence. These initiatives
21 must be primarily focused on providing violence intervention services
22 to the small segment of the population that is identified as having
23 the highest risk of perpetrating or being victimized by firearm
24 violence.

25 (3) Program grants shall be made on a competitive basis to cities
26 that are disproportionately impacted by violence, and to community-
27 based organizations that serve the residents of those cities. Where
28 appropriate, two or more cities may submit joint applications to
29 better address regional problems.

30 (4) An applicant for a program grant shall submit a proposal, in
31 a form prescribed by the office, which must include, but not be
32 limited to, all of the following:

33 (a) Clearly defined and measurable objectives for the grant;

34 (b) A statement describing how the applicant proposes to use the
35 grant to implement an evidence-based firearm reduction initiative in
36 accordance with this section;

37 (c) A statement describing how the applicant proposes to use the
38 grant to enhance coordination of existing violence prevention and
39 intervention programs and minimize duplication of services; and

1 (d) Evidence indicating that the proposed firearm violence
2 reduction initiative would likely reduce the incidence of firearm
3 violence.

4 (5) In awarding program grants, the office shall give preference
5 to applicants whose grant proposals demonstrate the greatest
6 likelihood of reducing firearm violence in the applicant's community,
7 without contributing to mass incarceration.

8 (6) Each city that receives a program grant shall distribute no
9 less than fifty percent of the grant funds to one or more of any of
10 the following types of entities:

11 (a) Community-based organizations; and

12 (b) Public agencies or departments, other than law enforcement
13 agencies or departments, that are primarily dedicated to community
14 safety or firearm violence prevention.

15 (7) The office shall form a grant selection advisory committee
16 including, without limitation, persons who have been impacted by
17 violence, formerly incarcerated persons, and persons with direct
18 experience in implementing evidence-based violence reduction
19 initiatives, including initiatives that incorporate public health and
20 community-based approaches.

21 (8) Each grantee shall report to the office, in a form and at
22 intervals prescribed by the office, the grantee's progress in
23 achieving the grant objectives.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 2 through 4 of this act
25 constitute a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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