

MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 16-18

INTRODUCED BY: Montgomery County Medical Society
MedChi Public Health Committee
Medical Student Section

SUBJECT: Lifting the Ban on Gun Violence Research & Related AMA Strategies

Whereas, increasing gun violence in the United States is a public health crisis; and

Whereas, the CDC has been restricted from research gun violence since Congress' adoption of the Dickey Amendment in 1996 which mandated that "none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the CDC may be used to advocate or promote gun control;" and

Whereas, physicians have a key role in promoting policies and legislation, in providing leadership in public affairs efforts; and in education the public regarding violence prevention; and

Whereas, the American Medical Association has existing policy related to lifting the gun violence research ban (D-145.995, D-145.994; D-145.997; D-145.975); therefore be it

Resolved, that MedChi's AMA Delegation request a report from our American Medical Association at its 2018 Interim Meeting outlining the status of the AMA's lobbying efforts to lift the ban on gun violence research and its continuing strategies to address the public health crisis of gun violence in our country.

As amended and adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on April 29, 2018.

Relevant AMA Policy:

D-145.995: Our AMA: (1) will immediately make a public statement that gun violence represents a public health crisis which requires a comprehensive public health response and solution; and (2) will actively lobby Congress to lift the gun violence research ban. (Adopted: Annual 2016)

D-145.994: Our AMA will provide an informational report on recent and current organizational actions taken on our existing AMA policies regarding removing the restrictions on federal funding for firearms violence research, with additional recommendations on any ongoing or proposed upcoming actions. (Adopted: Interim 2016)

D-145.997: Our AMA recognizes that uncontrolled ownership and use of firearms, especially handguns, is a serious threat to the public's health inasmuch as the weapons are one of the main causes of intentional and unintentional injuries and deaths. Therefore the AMA: (1) encourages and endorses the development and presentation of safety education programs that will engender more responsible use and storage of firearms; (2) urges that government, the CDC in particular, enlarge their efforts in the study of firearm-related injuries and in the development of ways and means of reducing such injuries and deaths; (3) urges Congress to enact needed legislation to regulate more effectively the importation and interstate traffic of all handguns; (4) urges the Congress to support recent legislative efforts to ban

the manufacture and importation of nonmetallic, not readily detectable weapons, which also resemble toy guns; (5) encourages the improvement or modification of firearms so as to make them as safe as humanly possible; (6) encourages nongovernmental organizations to develop and test new, less hazardous designs for firearms; (7) urges that significant portion of any funds recovered from firearms manufacturers and dealers through legal proceedings be used for gun safety education and gun-violence prevention; and (8) strongly urges US legislators to fund further research into the epidemiology of risks related to gun violence on a national level. (Adopted: Interim 2013)

D-145.975: 1. Our AMA supports: a) federal and state research on firearm-related injuries and deaths; b) increased funding for the use of state and national firearms injury databases, including the expansion of the National Violent Death Reporting System to all 50 states and US territories, to inform state and federal health policy; c) encouraging physicians to access evidence-based data regarding firearm safety to educate and counsel patients about firearm safety; d) the rights of physicians to have free and open communication with their patients regarding firearm safety and the use of gun locks in their homes; e) encouraging local projects to facilitate the low-cost distribution of gun locks in homes; f) encouraging physicians to become involved in local firearm safety classes as a means of promoting injury prevention and the public health; and g) encouraging CME providers to consider, as appropriate, inclusion of presentations about the prevention of gun violence in national, state, and local continuing medical education programs.

2. Our AMA supports initiatives to enhance access to mental and cognitive health care, with greater focus on the diagnosis and management of mental illness and concurrent substance abuse disorders, and work with state and specialty medical societies and other interested stakeholders to identify and develop standardized approaches to mental health assessment for potential violent behavior. (Adopted: Annual 2016)