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SJR 20 (Hall) Publicly Funded Gun Violence Research
FACT SHEET

Sponsors: Senator Isadore Hall, III
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ISSUE

Every day, gun violence destroys lives, families and communities. From 2002 to 2013, California lost 38,576 individuals to gun violence. In 2013 alone, guns were used to kill 2,900 Californians, including 251 children and teens. That year, at least 6,035 others were hospitalized or treated in emergency rooms for non-fatal gunshot wounds, including 1,275 children and teens.

Since 1996, and in spite of these staggering numbers, the United States Congress has continually adopted annual policy riders known as the “Dickey Amendment” and “Rehberg Amendment.” These riders have effectively prohibited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other agencies, from conducting publicly funded scientific research on the causes of gun violence or its effects on public health.

During the same period, the federal government has spent \$240 million a year on traffic safety research which kills the same number of people as gun violence every year. This lack of research has made it more difficult to objectively assess the public health impacts of gun violence and find ways to reduce the number of innocent lives lost every year.

SOLUTION

SJR 20 (Hall) urges the United States Congress to promptly lift the prohibition on publicly funded scientific research on the causes of gun violence and its effects on public health, and to appropriate funds to the CDC and other relevant agencies falling under the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

A comprehensive evidence-based federal approach to reducing and preventing gun violence is needed to ensure that our communities are safe. Federal research is crucial to saving lives from motor vehicle accidents, sudden infant death syndrome, lead poisoning and countless other public crises. It is time for Congress to lift the prohibition on publicly funded research, and treat gun violence as the public health crisis that it is.

SUPPORT

California Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians