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**ILLINOIS PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
RESOLUTION NO. 4
2023**

Firearm Violence Control in Illinois

WHEREAS, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker declared gun violence a public health crisis in 2021 and pledged \$250 funding to support the interrupt and prevent such violence¹; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Pritzker signed the Firearm Industry Responsibility Act (FIRA) into law in August 2023 which holds gun manufacturers accountable for knowingly causing harm from unsafe marketing practices². In addition, the Illinois Supreme Court recently upheld the state's assault weapons ban³; and,

WHEREAS, more than 19,384 people were killed in gun homicides in the United States in 2020—an increase of 34% over 2019—representing what is likely to be the largest single-year increase in gun homicide in recorded history⁵. In an average year, gun violence in America kills 40,000 people, and wounds twice as many⁴; and,

WHEREAS, there were 1,745 firearm related deaths in Illinois in 2020⁷; and,

WHEREAS, 44.13% of citizens of Chicago residents have been shot at, but not hit and single-year rates of gun violence victimization exceeded those of Illinois police⁵; and,

WHEREAS, gun violence is a leading cause of premature death and a key driver of racial disparities in life expectancy in the United States⁵; and,

WHEREAS, mental illness is strongly associated with increased risk of suicide, which accounts for over half of US firearms-related fatalities⁶; and,

WHEREAS, people who witness at least one shooting in their neighborhoods or local communities exhibit more symptoms of depression and are 32-60% more likely to meet the criteria for depression than people who do not witness a shooting⁸; and,

WHEREAS, U.S. women are 21 times more likely to be murdered by a firearm than women in other wealthy countries⁹. Also, keeping a gun in the home is associated with increased risk of both suicide and homicide of women¹⁰; and,

WHEREAS, 22.6% of households in Illinois own at least one gun. Household gun ownership was positively associated with the overall youth suicide rate, therefore states with high levels of household gun ownership are likely to experience higher youth suicide rates¹¹; and,

WHEREAS, our federal, state, and local governments are spending a combined average of nearly \$35 million each day to deal with the aftermath of gun violence across the country, which has an economic consequence to our nation of \$557 billion. This staggering \$557 billion figure is five times the nation's budget for the Department of Education, which funds preschool through college for millions of Americans⁴; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois State Ranked 40th in budgetary expenditure on gun violence, with a per capita cost of \$1,468 and a total cost of \$18,602,822,947 per annum⁸; and,

WHEREAS, even where several state legislators were unable to pass statewide gun-rights measures, they succeeded in passing preemption, preserving state authority over a wide range of gun-control and gun-rights policy topics¹²; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), as a public health leader in Illinois, recognizes firearms as public health program & guns public health crisis will:

1. Encourage appropriate quarters to introduce mandatory waiting periods for purchasing firearms to allow for thorough background checks.
2. Enact legislation to ban the sale, possession, and manufacture of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines in the state.
3. Require all firearm owners to complete certified firearm safety education courses, emphasizing safe storage, handling, and responsible use. Impose penalties for non-compliance.
4. Mandate reporting of lost or stolen firearms within a specified time frame to deter illegal sales and trafficking.
5. Establish a comprehensive statewide database for tracking gun-related incidents, injuries, and deaths. Increase funding for mental health services, ensuring accessible and affordable treatment for individuals in need.
6. Increase education and awareness of Firearms Restraining Order ("Red Flag" law) that allow law enforcement and family members to petition the court to temporarily remove firearms from individuals deemed a risk to themselves or others. Develop crisis intervention teams to respond to mental health crises and prevent potential violence.
7. Develop public education campaigns that promote responsible gun ownership, emphasize safe storage, and raise awareness about the risks of gun violence. Collaborate with schools to incorporate gun violence prevention into curricula.

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