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Committee(s) Assignment:

Solis (25) Taliaferro (29) Thompson (11) Tunney (44) Villegas (36)
Waguespack (32) Zaiewski (23) Resolution

Call for hearing(s) on how City of Chicago and State of Illinois intends to address gun-and-gang-related crime including distribution and trafficking of weapons Committee on Public Safety

Committee on Public Safety June 22, 2016 City
Council Meeting

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, automatic and semi-automatic military assault weapons have been identified as a threat of epidemic levels to public safety; and

WHEREAS, recent events involving such weapons have caused mass casualties throughout the country in such places as Sandy Hook, CT; Aurora, CO; and most recently Orlando, FL, which saw the mass murder of 49 victims; and

WHEREAS, gun violence and gang violence disproportionately impact underrepresented groups such as communities of color, the economically disadvantaged and other minority groups, preying upon vulnerable communities and youth who are denied access to education, employment and social services; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal crisis and budget impasse at the state level have led to cuts amounting in the tens of millions from important social services, which have in turn increased gang-related violence as at-risk youth are turned away from social services providers and employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Crime Gun Intelligence Center has found that roughly 40% of guns used in crimes recovered in Chicago originate from points of sale in the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, gun-related violence in the City of Chicago has increased dramatically over the past several years, with the

South and West Sides neighborhoods being particularly affected; and

WHEREAS, it is widely acknowledged that the trauma of gun violence inflicts harm not only on victims, but also on their families and communities, and;

WHEREAS, the long-term emotional and physical damage caused by gun-related violence is of such national consequence that prevention and treatment has been researched by the Center for Disease Control, and;

WHEREAS, as of June 20, 2016, there were 1,771 shooting victims in Chicago since January 1, 2016, more than 250 of whom were shot and killed; and

WHEREAS, 27 shootings occurred in the neighborhood known as Back of the Yards between January and March of 2016, an increase of 107 percent over that time in 2015; and

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2016, one or more assault rifles were used to fire more than 40 rounds into a home on the 4300 block of South Marshfield Avenue, a three flat building that is home to eight children; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2016, at approximately 1:30 pm, Salvador Suarez was gunned down by an assault rifle outside the Holy Cross Church, located on the 4500 block of South Wood; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Raymond Lopez and Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart have joined with community groups as well as countless neighbors and community members to call for action and unity to address the ever-present and deadly threat of gang and gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Police Department has acknowledged that the plague of gun-related and gang-related violence on our streets is a threat to public safety and law enforcement officers; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Police Department has called for stronger state and federal gun laws, and;

WHEREAS, according to the 2015 Annual Firearms Manufacturing and Exportation Report (AFMER), published yearly US Department of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), 10,844,792 firearms were manufactured in total in 2013; and

WHEREAS, per the above referenced report, an additional 5,539,539 firearms were imported to the United States, only 319 of which were for military use; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated, based on a report by the Congressional Research Service, that as of 2015, there were 357 million guns in the United States, roughly 40 million more guns than people; and

WHEREAS, multiple national studies have shown that the majority of Americans support a ban on assault weapons;

WHEREAS, seven states currently have legislation banning assault weapons; and

WHEREAS, numerous municipalities in Illinois, including Lincolnwood, Skokie, Evanston, Highland Park, North Chicago, Melrose Park, Riverdale, Dolton, Hazel Crest, Homewood, and Cook County have passed assault weapons bans; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court recently reinforced the legality of individual state laws that ban certain weapons, refusing to review appeals challenging such state law bans;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and the members of Chicago City Council call for hearings before the Committee on Public Safety on how the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois intends to address the crisis that is gun-and gang-related crime, including the illegal distribution and trafficking of weapons, in the City of Chicago, and the traumatic effects it has on the people of Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that hearings include testimony from affected communities and victims of gun violence, law enforcement, and experts and advocates in the fields of gun regulation and gang violence to consider the impact and consequences of gun and gang-related violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said hearings explore all Constitutionally available avenues in limiting access to automatic and semi-automatic assault weapon; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that suitable copies of this resolution be filed with the Illinois Congressional Delegation for consideration

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and members of the Chicago City Council support of a state and federal ban on automatic and semi-automatic assault weapons and the passage of such legislation; and