
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that gun violence is a
2 significant public health and public safety problem.
3 Nationwide, there are thirty thousand deaths related to gun
4 violence annually, and the economic cost of gun violence was
5 estimated at \$229,000,000,000 in 2012.

6 The legislature further finds that the tragic spike in
7 well-publicized mass shootings of recent years accounts for less
8 than one per cent of all gun violence. Across the nation, rates
9 of fatal gun violence have remained essentially unchanged for
10 more than a decade, as declines in homicide have been offset by
11 increases in suicide. Suicide is the leading cause of fatal
12 injury in Hawaii, with one person dying by suicide every two
13 days. Twenty per cent of these deaths involve a gun.

14 The legislature further finds that too little is known
15 about gun violence and its prevention. This is due to a dire
16 lack of research. In 1996, Congress passed the Dickey



1 Amendment, with a provision which prevents the use of federal
2 money for gun violence research and prevention.

3 As a result of this effective ban on gun violence research,
4 funding for gun violence prevention research has declined
5 dramatically. According to study published in the Journal of
6 the American Medical Association, between 2004 and 2015 research
7 related to gun violence was substantially underfunded and
8 understudied compared with other leading causes of death. The
9 study said that the \$22,000,000 spent on gun violence research
10 represented only a paltry 1.6 per cent of the \$1,400,000,000 in
11 funding that would be predicted based on the number of deaths
12 caused by guns.

13 Since the federal government has halted research relating
14 to gun violence, both the federal and state governments lack the
15 capacity to analyze data to track black market guns used in
16 crimes and develop evidence-based policies which can save lives.

17 The purpose of this Act is to prevent gun violence and save
18 lives by establishing the Hawaii gun violence prevention center
19 within the University of Hawaii with a mission to analyze and
20 develop strategies to prevent gun violence in Hawaii.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new subpart to part IV to be appropriately
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 " . Hawaii Gun Violence Prevention Center
5 §304-A Hawaii gun violence prevention center; established.

6 (a) There is established within the University of Hawaii the
7 Hawaii gun violence prevention center. The center shall be
8 directed and managed by an administrator appointed by the
9 president of the University of Hawaii subject to chapter 76.

10 (b) The center shall conduct research and analysis of gun-
11 related violence and its prevention, assist law enforcement, and
12 make recommendations for prevention of gun-related violence.
13 The interdisciplinary work of the center shall address the
14 following:

15 (1) The nature of gun violence, including individual and
16 societal determinants of risk for involvement in gun
17 violence, whether as a victim or a perpetrator;

18 (2) The individual, community, and societal consequences
19 of gun violence; and

20 (3) Prevention and treatment of gun violence at the
21 individual, community, and societal levels.



1 (c) The center shall conduct basic, translational, and
2 transformative research with a mission to generate scientific
3 evidence on which sound gun violence prevention policies and
4 programs can be based. Its research shall include but not be
5 limited to the effectiveness of existing laws and policies
6 intended to reduce gun violence, including the criminal misuse
7 of guns, and efforts to promote the responsible ownership and
8 use of guns.

9 (d) The center may coordinate with other institutions
10 working on this issue.

11 (e) The center shall work on a continuing basis with the
12 State and counties to identify, implement, and evaluate
13 innovative gun violence prevention policies and programs.

14 (f) To help ensure a long-term and successful effort to
15 understand and prevent gun violence, the center may recruit and
16 provide specialized training opportunities for staff members.

17 (g) As a supplement to its own research, the center may
18 administer a grant program for research on gun violence. All
19 research funds shall be awarded on a basis of scientific merit
20 as determined by an open, competitive peer review process that
21 assures objectivity, consistency, and high quality. All



1 qualified investigators, regardless of institutional
2 affiliation, shall have equal access and opportunity to compete
3 for the funds.

4 (h) The peer review process for the selection of grants
5 awarded by the center shall be modeled on the process used by
6 the National Institutes of Health in its grantmaking process.

7 (i) The Hawaii gun violence prevention center shall submit
8 to the governor and the legislature an annual report on its
9 research and findings, program accomplishments, and future
10 direction of the program. This report shall include a financial
11 report on the center's expenditures, grants made, and pending
12 grants.

13 (j) State agencies and entities including but not limited
14 to the department of the attorney general, department of health,
15 department of public safety, department of defense, and
16 department of human services, shall cooperate with the
17 University of Hawaii and the Hawaii gun violence prevention
18 center and shall provide to the center, upon proper request, the
19 data necessary for the center to conduct its research.

20 (k) The center and all recipients of grants shall provide
21 copies of their research publications to the governor, the



1 legislature, and agencies supplying data used in the conduct of
2 that research as soon as is practicable following publication.

3 **§304-B Hawaii gun violence prevention center special fund.**

4 (a) There is established in the state treasury a special fund
5 to be designated as the Hawaii gun violence prevention center
6 special fund to carry out the purposes of the center. The
7 following moneys shall be deposited into the Hawaii gun violence
8 prevention center special fund:

9 (1) Appropriations made by the legislature for deposit
10 into the special fund;

11 (2) Donations and contributions made by private
12 individuals or organizations; and

13 (3) Grants provided by governmental agencies or any other
14 source, except for funds that may not be used for the
15 purposes of the special fund pursuant to federal law.

16 (b) The Hawaii gun violence prevention center special fund
17 may be used by the center for one or more of the following
18 purposes:

19 (1) Planning, designing, developing, implementing, and
20 reporting on gun violence prevention policies pursuant
21 to this subpart;



1 (2) Providing grants to the counties and nongovernmental
2 organizations for gun violence prevention in projects
3 subject to this subpart; and

4 (3) Administrative costs."

5 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
8 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
9 2020-2021 to be deposited into the Hawaii gun violence
10 prevention center special fund to carry out the purposes of this
11 Act.

12 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the gun violence
13 prevention center special fund the sum of \$ or so much
14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
15 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
16 2020-2021 for the establishment of three or more full-time
17 permanent positions to carry out the provisions of this Act.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
19 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 5. In codifying the new sections added by section
21 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute



1 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating
2 the new sections in this Act.

3 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Gun Violence Prevention; Research; Appropriation; Special Fund

Description:

Establishes the Hawaii Gun Violence Prevention Center within the University of Hawaii to research strategies to prevent gun violence. Creates a special fund to support the Center. Appropriates funds. (HB1541 HD1)

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