



# **TERRA LAWSON-REMER**

## **VICE-CHAIR**

**SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE: October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**18**

**TO: Board of Supervisors**

#### **SUBJECT**

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM'S RIGHT TO SAFETY AMENDMENT & CALL FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

In the past, San Diego County leaders did not do enough to tackle the issue of gun violence in our communities. The Board of Supervisors (Board) actively defended the 2nd Amendment and did not use their authority to its fullest potential to better protect residents from people who recklessly aim to harm others.

Over the last three years, the new Board and passionate gun violence prevention advocates here in San Diego County have made ghost guns illegal, secured training for County social workers to know the signs of potential gun violence in a home, required firearms in unincorporated areas to be safely stored, and fought for the county to investigate and bring back recommendations to the Board to initiate or join litigation against manufacturers.

On September 29, 2023, the office of Supervisor Lawson-Remer hosted a Gun Violence Reduction Summit that was attended in person and virtually by nearly two hundred community members, experts, and federal, state, county, and city elected leaders. This served as a launching pad for new ideas as it relates to gun violence prevention. Many of the individuals who attended the summit indicated we need more commonsense solutions that will keep San Diegans as safe as possible. Governor Gavin Newsom's Right to Safety Amendment is a great next step in this direction.

California is leading the way as the first state in the nation to call for a Constitutional Convention for gun safety. The item today, requests the adoption of a resolution by the County of San Diego in support of Governor Newsom's Right to Safety Amendment and call for a Constitutional Convention on gun safety. This action would leave the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment unchanged, but the addition of the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment would permanently prioritize a federal minimum age to purchase a firearm from age 18 to 21. An exception for law enforcement would be recommended. The Governor's

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amendment will also mandate universal background checks, institute a reasonable waiting period, and bar civilian purchase of assault weapons within the United States Constitution.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**VICE-CHAIR TERRA LAWSON-REMER**

1. Adopt the resolution titled: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO IN SUPPORT OF THE RIGHT TO SAFETY AMENDMENT & CALL FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FOR GUN SAFETY

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Communities of color and those living in poverty are disproportionately impacted by gun violence, and for every gun homicide, there are more than two nonfatal gun shootings. Those that are exposed to gun violence are much more likely to experience stress, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD). The long-term repercussions of this are immeasurable. It is imperative that all of our communities are provided with the right to safety through commonsense gun regulations and interventions.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The proposed item contributes to the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goals by prioritizing the long-term health, safety, and well-being of San Diego residents through support for actions that will reduce gun violence.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The United States of America has a dire gun violence epidemic. It is the leading cause for premature death and is a key factor in crime across the nation. Over 110 individuals are killed from guns every single day, and in 2023, there have been over 500 mass shootings. Systemic inequities in combination with weak gun laws have resulted in devastating rates of gun violence within our communities of color, and firearms have become the leading cause of death for children and adolescents 19 and below. Reducing the incidence of gun violence is an urgent and complex issue, that requires bold solutions and interventions.

The state of California has led the way for the U.S. in firearm safety laws, and it is evident that they work, the death rate as it relates to guns is 39% lower than the national average. After many of California's commonsense gun laws went into effect in the 1990s, the mortality rate declined

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by 55% over the first couple of decades, which is nearly four times the decrease compared to the rest of the country. This is primarily due to the commonsense gun safety laws that are in place in the state.

Locally, the County of San Diego (County) has taken several commonsense actions in response to gun violence, aiming to address loopholes and keep our communities safe. Ghost guns were made illegal, and our County social workers are trained to be aware of the signs for potential gun violence in a home. In February of 2022, firearms were required to be safely stored in the unincorporated areas with a trigger lock or locked away within a container. Most recently, on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a Gun Violence Reduction Summit was held at the County of San Diego which served as a forum for new ideas and discussion. Attendees at the summit indicated we need more commonsense solutions that will keep San Diegans as safe as possible.

This is the consensus across most of the United States, many individuals support strengthening gun laws such as requiring criminal background checks on gun buyers, improving enforcement of current gun laws, raising the legal age to buy a gun to 21, except for law enforcement, and banning non-law enforcement purchase of assault rifles and semi-automatic weapons. Taking additional precautions such as these, so that deadly weapons are not getting into the hands of individuals that may be a danger to themselves or others, is a crucial step forward in addressing the U.S. gun violence crisis and will ultimately save lives.

The item today requests the adoption of a resolution in support of Governor Newsom's Right to Safety Amendment. While this would leave the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment unchanged, the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment would permanently prioritize a federal minimum age to purchase a firearm from age 18 to 21. An exception for law enforcement would be recommended. The Governor's amendment will also mandate universal background checks, institute a reasonable waiting period, and bar civilian purchase of assault weapons within the United States Constitution.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

These actions support the County of San Diego's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan Empower, Equity, and Community initiatives by investing in communities through supporting gun safety measures that will enhance the well-being, resiliency, and quality of life for residents across the San Diego region.

Respectfully submitted,



TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Supervisor, Third District

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**ATTACHMENT(S)**

ATTACHMENT A: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM'S RIGHT TO SAFETY AMENDMENT & CALL FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION