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Clerk 06/06/2022

A MOTION requesting the King County executive assess the feasibility of establishing a year-round voluntary safe firearm and ammunition return program within the King County sheriff's office.

WHEREAS, as of May 26, 2022, there have been 231 mass shootings in the United States this year where 4 or more people have been shot, 27 of which occurred in schools, and

WHEREAS, the racist attack in Buffalo, New York, on May 14, 2022, killed 10 innocent people, and 10 days later, the May 24, 2022, shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas killed 19 fourth graders and two teachers and seriously injured many others, both physically and mentally, and

WHEREAS, gun violence killed more than 45,000 people in the United States last year including through homicides, suicides and accidental deaths, with suicides making up more than half of all gun related deaths, and

WHEREAS, gun violence is the leading cause of death for children and teens up to 19 years old in the United States, and

WHEREAS, with only 4 percent of the world's population, the United States possesses nearly 46 percent of all civilian-owned firearms in the world, which is 393 million out of an estimated 857 million civilian-owned firearms worldwide, and

WHEREAS, like the rest of the nation, King County is suffering under an increase in gun violence, and

WHEREAS, in 2021, according to data from the King County prosecutor, the total number of shots fired in King County was up approximately 54 percent, the number of overall shooting victims was up 70

percent, and the number of shooting fatalities was up 54 percent over the 4-year average from 2017 through 2020, and

WHEREAS, the 460 shooting victims reported in 2021 were disproportionately people of color at 81 percent and 48 percent of fatal and nonfatal victims identified as Black, and

WHEREAS, King County has implemented programs and policies to increase gun safety, including requiring the destruction of forfeited firearms, encouraging safe firearm storage and enforcement of Extreme Risk Protection Orders, and

WHEREAS, voluntary firearm and ammunition return programs have proven to be effective in removing firearms from homes and communities and provide opportunities to educate residents about gun violence reduction strategies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The council requests the King County executive to assess the feasibility of establishing a year-round voluntary safe firearm and ammunition return program within the King County sheriff's office.

B. The voluntary safe firearm and ammunition return program should include, but not be limited to:

1. A process by which any individual may peaceably deliver and abandon any unwanted firearm or ammunition to any King County sheriff's office location at any time;

2. A process by which an individual can request that a King County sheriff's deputy or authorized sheriff's office employee retrieve unwanted firearms or ammunition from a specified location;

3. The destruction or disposal of all unwanted firearms voluntarily relinquished to the King County sheriff's office; and

4. The provision of monetary or other incentives to encourage community participation in the program.

C. The executive should further assess whether the voluntary safe firearm and ammunition return program could be developed and implemented in collaboration with local jurisdictions

throughout King County.