117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION  

H. R.  

To provide for a coordinated national research program to examine the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of violence and unintended injury and death relating to gun ownership, use, and trafficking, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Johnson of Texas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To provide for a coordinated national research program to examine the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of violence and unintended injury and death relating to gun ownership, use, and trafficking, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
4 This Act may be cited as the “National Gun Violence
5 Research Act”.

March 3, 2021 (3:39 p.m.)
SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In the last 50 years, more individuals in the United States have died from gunshots than in all wars in which the United States was a combatant, combined.

(2) The rate of gun violence deaths in the United States is more than double that of other high-income nations.

(3) Guns accounted for 74 percent of homicides and 51 percent of suicides in 2016, totaling over 37,000 deaths in the United States.

(4) Gun violence disproportionately affects racial minorities, with African Americans comprising nearly 60 percent of homicide victims and 22 percent of unintentional injury deaths in 2016.

(5) Provisions in appropriations Acts dating back to 1996 have had a chilling effect on Federal funding for research on gun violence across the Federal Government and, as a result, research on gun violence is significantly underfunded relative to other leading causes of death.

(6) Research examining the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of gun-related violence, suicide, and unintentional injury and death does not
constitute advocacy in support of, or opposition to,
gun control policies or regulations.

(7) More research and high-quality data relating
to gun violence are needed to inform the development
of effective strategies to reduce the incidence
of gun-related injury and death.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
the Director of the Office of Science and Technology
Policy.

(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
term “institution of higher education” has the
meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher

(3) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means
the National Gun Violence Research Program estab-
lished under section 5.

SEC. 4. RESEARCH AND DATA RESTRICTIONS REPEAL.

(a) GUN TRACE DATA.—

(1) The matter under the heading “Bureau of
Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives—Salaries and Expenses” in title I of division B of the
Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (18 U.S.C. 923 note; Public Law
112–55; 125 Stat. 609–610) is amended by striking the 6th proviso.


(b) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds made available to the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, may be used to conduct research with respect to gun violence.

SEC. 5. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President, acting through the Director, shall develop and implement a program to improve public health and safety through research on gun violence (to be known as the “National Gun Violence Research Program”), through activities carried out in collaboration with covered agencies that—
(1) support gun violence research;

(2) accelerate the translation of gun violence re-
search into effective policy interventions to reduce
the incidence of injury and death related to guns;

(3) expand the number of researchers and stu-
dents in the field of gun violence research; and

(4) improve interagency planning and coordina-
tion of Federal Government activities relating to gun
violence research.

(b) PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—A covered agency, in car-
rying out activities described in subsection (a), shall—

(1) award grants to individual investigators and
interdisciplinary teams of investigators for projects
related to gun violence research;

(2) support projects funded under joint solicita-
tions by a collaboration of no fewer than two covered
agencies;

(3) establish interdisciplinary research centers
that are organized to investigate basic research
questions and inform policy decisions relating to gun
violence;

(4) provide for the education and training of
undergraduate students, graduate students, and
postdoctoral scholars in gun violence research; and
(5) promote the development of voluntary consensus gun safety technical standards.

(c) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, acting through the National Science and Technology Council, shall establish an interagency working group on gun violence research.

(2) COMPOSITION.—The working group established under this subsection shall be chaired by the Director and include representatives from—

(A) the National Science Foundation;

(B) the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

(C) the National Institutes of Health;

(D) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(E) the National Institute of Justice; and

(F) any other Federal agency (including an agency, department, or service thereof) that the Director considers appropriate.

(3) DUTIES.—The Working Group shall—

(A) oversee the planning, management, and coordination of the Program;
(B) provide for coordination among covered agencies of Federal gun violence research and other activities undertaken pursuant to the Program;

(C) establish and periodically update goals and priorities for the Program;

(D) develop, not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and update every 5 years, a strategic plan to guide the activities of the Program to meet the goals and priorities established under subparagraph (C).

(d) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, acting through the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, shall establish an advisory committee on gun violence research.

(2) COMPOSITION.—The advisory committee established under paragraph (1) shall be composed of not less than 12 members, including representatives of research institutions, institutions of higher education, industry, law enforcement, and relevant nonprofit organizations who are qualified to provide advice on the Program.
(3) DUTIES.—The advisory committee established under subsection (a) shall assess—

(A) the management, coordination, implementation, and activities of the Program;

(B) the balance of activities and funding across the Program;

(C) whether the Program priorities and goals developed by the working group established under subsection (c)(3) are helping to improve public health and safety; and

(D) the need to revise the Program.

(e) COVERED AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “covered agency” means—

(1) the National Science Foundation;

(2) the National Institute for Standards and Technology;

(3) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(4) the National Institutes of Health;

(5) the National Institute of Justice; and

(6) such other Federal agency as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Director to carry
out this section $200,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.

SEC. 6. AGENCY ACTIVITIES.

(a) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—

(1) RESEARCH.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations (or consortia of such institutions or organizations)—

(A) to support multidisciplinary research to better understand the nature, causes, and consequences of violence, including violence, suicide, unintended injury, and death involving guns;

(B) to examine the effects of gun policy interventions on—

(i) rates of suicide, homicide, and unintended injury and death;

(ii) individuals’ ability to use guns for self-defense, hunting, and recreation; and

(iii) the gun industry; and

(C) to educate and train researchers in the field of violence, including gun violence, re-

search.
(2) National Center for Violence Research.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall award grants on a competitive basis to institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations (or consortia of such institutions or organizations) to establish one or more centers to conduct multidisciplinary research and education activities in support of the goals and priorities of the Program (to be known as "National Center for Violence Research").

(3) Authorization of Appropriations.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection $15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.

(b) National Institute of Standards and Technology.—

(1) Voluntary Consensus Standards.—The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall establish a program to promote the development of voluntary consensus gun safety technical standards. Such effort shall include—

(A) outreach, coordination, and technical support to relevant industry and nonindustry stakeholders and standards development organi-
zations to assist such entities in the development of voluntary consensus gun safety technical standards;

(B) the conduct of research to support efforts to develop and improve such standards and conformity assessment; and

(C) the development of such standard reference material as the Director determines is necessary to further the development of such standards.

(2) PROHIBITION ON REGULATION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as conferring upon the Secretary of Commerce any authority to establish or enforce mandatory gun safety standards.

(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection $1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.

(e) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other scientific agencies within the Department of
Health and Human Services, shall award grants on a competitive basis to conduct or support research into the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of gun violence.

(2) APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this subsection $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.

(d) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—

(1) RESEARCH.—The Attorney General of the United States, acting through the National Institute of Justice, shall conduct or sponsor research into the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of gun violence.

(2) COMPETITION.—The Attorney General of the United States, acting through the National Institute of Justice, shall sponsor an inducement prize competition under section 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719) to demonstrate through testing and evaluation the reliability of guns and gun accessories with integrated advanced gun safety technology (commonly referred to as smart guns, user-author-
ized handguns, childproof guns, and personalized

guns).

(3) TRACE DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180
days after the date of enactment of this Act,
the Attorney General, in collaboration with the
Secretary of the Department of Health and
Human Services, shall develop consensus proto-
cols for granting researchers access to gun
trace data while protecting the confidentiality of
gun owners and dealers.

(B) DATA SHARING.—Not later than 1
year after the date of enactment of this Act, the
Attorney General, acting through the Bureau of
Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives,
shall commence sharing with researchers ac-
cording to the protocols developed under sub-
paragraph (A), the contents of the Firearms
Trace System database and information re-
quired to be kept by licensees pursuant to sec-

tion 923(g) of title 18, United States Code, or
required to be reported pursuant to paragraphs
(3) and (7) of such section 923(g).

(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
this subsection $3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2027.