Whereas, Escalating violence and shootings are rampant such that as of the writing of this resolution, this is the eighteenth school shooting in 2018, the equivalent of one every two and a half days so far this year; and

Whereas, The President of the United States has proposed bonuses for teachers to undergo gun training for concealed weapons; and

Whereas, The job of a teacher is to educate their students, not to shoot potential armed assailants; and

Whereas, Randi Weingarten, head of the American Federation of Teachers, criticized the proposal in a statement on behalf of the teachers' union, "Teachers don't want to be armed," Weingarten said. "We want to teach. We don't want to be, and would never have the expertise needed to be, sharp shooters; no amount of training can prepare an armed teacher to go up against an AR-15."; and

Whereas, Arming teachers runs counter to existing AMA policy on guns in the school setting, school violence, training teachers to identify potentially dangerous children, increasing mental illness detection, and violence-reduction criteria that encourage states to ensure that schools are safe harbors, secure from weapons, and staffed with educators trained in violence mitigation (H-60.947, H-145.983, H-60.946, D-345.994, H-60.943); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association advocate for schools to remain gun-free zones (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA oppose requirements or incentives of teachers to carry weapons. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Minimal - less than $1,000.

Received: 04/19/18

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Guns in School Settings H-60.947 - Our AMA recommends: (1) all children who take guns or other weapons to school should receive an evaluation by a psychiatrist or an appropriately trained mental health professional; and (2) that children who are determined by such evaluation to have a mental illness should receive appropriate treatment. Res. 402, I-98 Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 2, A-08
Firearms as a Public Health Problem in the United States - Injuries and Death H-145.997 - Our AMA recognizes that uncontrolled ownership and use of firearms, especially handguns, is a serious threat to the public's health inasmuch as the weapons are one of the main causes of intentional and unintentional injuries and deaths. Therefore, the AMA: (1) encourages and endorses the development and presentation of safety education programs that will engender more responsible use and storage of firearms; (2) urges that government agencies, the CDC in particular, enlarge their efforts in the study of firearm-related injuries and in the development of ways and means of reducing such injuries and deaths; (3) urges Congress to enact needed legislation to regulate more effectively the importation and interstate traffic of all handguns; (4) urges the Congress to support recent legislative efforts to ban the manufacture and importation of nonmetallic, not readily detectable weapons, which also resemble toy guns; (5) encourages the improvement or modification of firearms so as to make them as safe as humanly possible; (6) encourages nongovernmental organizations to develop and test new, less hazardous designs for firearms; (7) urges that a significant portion of any funds recovered from firearms manufacturers and dealers through legal proceedings be used for gun safety education and gun-violence prevention; and (8) strongly urges US legislators to fund further research into the epidemiology of risks related to gun violence on a national level. CSA Rep. A, I-87 Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. I-93-50 Appended: Res. 403; I-99 Reaffirmation A-07 Reaffirmation A-13 Appended: Res. 921, I-13

Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis D-145.995 - Our AMA: (1) will immediately make a public statement that gun violence represents a public health crisis which requires a comprehensive public health response and solution; and (2) will actively lobby Congress to lift the gun violence research ban. Res. 1011, A-16

Firearm Safety and Research, Reduction in Firearm Violence, and Enhancing Access to Mental Health Care H-145.975 - 1. Our AMA supports: a) federal and state research on firearm-related injuries and deaths; b) increased funding for and the use of state and national firearms injury databases, including the expansion of the National Violent Death Reporting System to all 50 states and U.S. territories, to inform state and federal health policy; c) encouraging physicians to access evidence-based data regarding firearm safety to educate and counsel patients about firearm safety; d) the rights of physicians to have free and open communication with their patients regarding firearm safety and the use of gun locks in their homes; e) encouraging local projects to facilitate the low-cost distribution of gun locks in homes; f) encouraging physicians to become involved in local firearm safety classes as a means of promoting injury prevention and the public health; and g) encouraging CME providers to consider, as appropriate, inclusion of presentations about the prevention of gun violence in national, state, and local continuing medical education programs. 2. Our AMA supports initiatives to enhance access to mental and cognitive health care, with greater focus on the diagnosis and management of mental illness and concurrent substance abuse disorders, and work with state and specialty medical societies and other interested stakeholders to identify and develop standardized approaches to mental health assessment for potential violent behavior. Sub. Res. 221, A-13 Appended: Res. 416, A-14 Reaffirmed: Res. 426, A-16


Need for Adequate Training of Teachers to Identify Potentially Dangerous Children and the Provision of Adequate Insurance Coverage to Provide for their Treatment H-60.946 - Our AMA: (1) supports teacher education initiatives to better enable them to identify children at risk for psychiatric illnesses, substance abuse, and potentially dangerous behaviors; and (2) reaffirms its support for parity of coverage for mental illness. Sub. Res. 118, A-99 Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 1, A-09

See also: Increasing Detection of Mental Illness and Encouraging Education D-345.994; Bullying Behaviors Among Children and Adolescents H-60.943