



Resolution 14-02 Calling for Criminal Background Checks on all Gun Sales

WHEREAS, all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Human Rights Commission is committed to protecting and advocating for justice, human rights, and the equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle was declared to be a Human Rights City on December 10, 2012, committing itself to protect, respect and fulfill the full range of inherent human rights for all as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and numerous other international human rights treaties; and

WHEREAS, the Commission work plan includes the support and encouragement of government agencies at the local, state and federal levels to implement international human rights principles within their capacities to guarantee protection of vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, Article Three of the Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person;” and

WHEREAS, Public Health Seattle & King County reports that from 2007 to 2011, 2,903 Washingtonians died from firearm violence; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports that from 1997 through 2012, firearms were used in 55% of domestic violence homicides; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Police report that 26 homicides took place in the City of Seattle in 2012; and

WHEREAS, 23 of the 26 homicides that took place in the City of Seattle in 2012 were committed with a firearm; and

WHEREAS, Public Health Seattle & King County report that in 2012, an estimated 14% of the public high school students in King County said that it would be very or sort of easy to get a handgun if they wanted to; and

WHEREAS, current national law mandates criminal background checks on gun sales from licensed importers, manufacturers, and dealers, but does not mandate criminal background checks on private sales; and

WHEREAS, private sales make up an estimated 40% of firearms sold nationally, and require no background check; and

WHEREAS, studies show that criminal background checks on gun sales, along with laws to increase gun vendor and purchaser accountability, reduce the availability of firearms to criminals; and

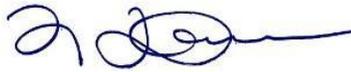
WHEREAS, states with laws requiring criminal background checks and permits to purchase firearms have lower rates of firearm homicides;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seattle Human Rights Commission hereby calls upon the Washington State Legislature to pass legislation to require criminal background checks on gun sales, in order to ensure that all Washingtonians are protected in the free and equal exercise of our human rights to life, liberty and security of person.

Adopted by the Seattle Human Rights Commission on March 12, 2014.



Catherine Moore, Co-Chair



Nika Dahlbacka, Co-Chair

Sarah Bishop

Sarah Bishop, Commissioner
Seattle Human Rights Commission