

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-B005
TITLE: Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue
PROPOSER: The Rt. Rev. William Stokes
TOPIC: Weapons

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2015-C005	Implement Laws to Decrease Gun Violence
2000-B007	Request the Removal of Handguns and Assault Weapons
2000-D004	Express Concern About Availability of Handguns and Assault Weapons
1997-C035	Urge Restrictions on Sale, Ownership and Use of Firearms
1991-B042	Express the Mind of the House Bishops Supporting Handgun Controls

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

B005 Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue

Proposer	The Rt. Rev. William Stokes
Endorsed by	Edwards, The Rt. Rev. Dan; Thom, The Rt. Rev. Brian
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention recognize gun violence in the United States as a public health crisis that requires federal government study to mitigate; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That 79th General Convention calls upon the Congress of the United States to repeal the Dickey Amendment and oppose similar efforts that seek to limit the scope of federally funded research into gun violence, and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Office of Government Relations, members of the Episcopal Public Policy Network and individual Episcopalians be encouraged to advocate for funding and other policy measures that would encourage the Centers for Disease Control and any other appropriate federal government entities to study thoroughly gun violence in the United States and its impact on public health.

EXPLANATION

In 2016, a coalition of more than 100 medical groups sent a letter to Congressional leaders saying:

“In 1996, Congress passed the so-called Dickey amendment as a rider to the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill. The language stated that the CDC could not fund research that would “advocate or promote gun control,” and the language has remained in each subsequent annual funding bill. At the same time, Congress cut CDC funding for this research. Although the Dickey amendment does not explicitly prevent research on gun violence, the combination of these two actions has caused a dramatic chilling effect on federal research that has stalled and stymied progress on gathering critical data to inform prevention of gun violence for the past 20 years. Furthermore, it has discouraged the next generation of researchers from entering the field. Gun violence is a serious public health epidemic resulting in the senseless deaths of an average of 91 Americans, and another 108 gun injuries, each and every day. A central part of preventing future tragedies is through conducting rigorous scientific research as this has been a proven successful approach in reducing deaths due to other injuries.”

In particular, doctors and public health experts emphasize that studying gun violence as a public health problem could help identify strategies for preventing gun-related suicides and accidents in which children fire guns.

In 2015, former Rep. Jay Dickey, who originally proposed the amendment bearing his name, wrote to the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force urging repeal of the amendment that bears his name. “Research could have been continued on gun violence without infringing on the rights of gun owners, in the same fashion that the highway industry continued its research without eliminating the automobile,” he wrote. “Doing nothing is no longer an acceptable solution.”