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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4020

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State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Representatives Campbell, Hatfield, Wolfe, B. Thomas, McMorris, Brumsickle, Morris, Radcliff, Elliot, Beeksma, Kessler, Carrell and L. Thomas

Read first time 02/09/95. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 TO THE HONORABLE JUDITH BILLINGS, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC  
2 INSTRUCTION, AND TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT  
3 IN WASHINGTON STATE:

4 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
5 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
6 represent and petition as follows:

7 WHEREAS, The loss of a child as the result of a firearms accident  
8 is a tragic event made even more so because it is often preventable;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Currently, our nation has approximately 60 to 70 million  
11 gun owners and an estimated 200 million or more firearms in private  
12 ownership that are potential accidents waiting to happen in the hands  
13 of an unsuspecting child; and

14 WHEREAS, In addition, many children play with toy guns that closely  
15 resemble real weapons and watch television programs and movies that  
16 routinely portray the irresponsible and unsafe handling of guns,  
17 factors that tend to blur the distinction between make-believe and  
18 reality, and encourage unsafe behavior; and

19 WHEREAS, Fortunately, the National Rifle Association, education  
20 professionals, urban housing safety officials, clinical psychologists,  
21 and firearms safety experts working together have developed a gun

1 safety program designed for children in prekindergarten through sixth  
2 grade; and

3 WHEREAS, The Eddie Eagle Gun Safety Program teaches the  
4 fundamentals of firearms safety to children in an effective and  
5 enjoyable way, emphasizing the correct safety procedure through  
6 numerous activities and materials that include workbooks, games, a  
7 video, class discussion, and role-playing scenarios; and

8 WHEREAS, Participating children receive certificates of merit and  
9 stickers and posters of Eddie Eagle, the program's lovable feathered  
10 mascot, in addition to invaluable safety training that could save a  
11 life; and

12 WHEREAS, Available free or at nominal cost, this worthwhile program  
13 is gaining popularity in many of our state's school districts and  
14 police departments; and

15 WHEREAS, Teaching children to act safely around firearms is a  
16 critical step in the effort to reduce the number of firearms accidents  
17 among children;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the school  
19 districts of the State of Washington promote the use of the National  
20 Rifle Association's Eddie Eagle Gun Safety Program in our schools to  
21 help prevent firearms accidents among children.

22 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
23 transmitted to the Honorable Judith Billings, Superintendent of Public  
24 Instruction, and to the Superintendent of each public school district  
25 in Washington State.

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