
SENATE BILL 6553

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Frockt, Dhingra, Keiser, Lias, Van De Wege, Cleveland, Darneille, Das, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Lovelett, Saldaña, Salomon, and Wilson, C.

Read first time 01/22/20. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1 AN ACT Relating to facilitating access to appropriate mental
2 health treatment for victims of gun violence; adding a new section to
3 chapter 43.31 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the epidemic of
6 gun violence has led to a corresponding increase in the number of
7 persons experiencing gun-related trauma. Those impacted by gun
8 violence may include victims, survivors, their families, and friends.
9 Mental health treatment available for impacted individuals may be
10 inadequate or inaccessible without assistance navigating the health
11 system. The legislature finds that the state must address the growing
12 need for mental health care responsive to gun violence in a
13 comprehensive manner that promotes evidence-based treatment.
14 Furthermore, the legislature finds there is a moral imperative to
15 help persons affected by trauma related to gun violence obtain
16 comprehensive information about treatment options and to access
17 appropriate care.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.31
19 RCW to read as follows:

1 The department of commerce shall contract with a level one trauma
2 center in the state of Washington to provide a statewide helpline,
3 counseling, and referral service for victims, friends, and family
4 members impacted by gun violence and community professionals, legal
5 practitioners, health providers, and others who engage with them. The
6 service must include the opportunity for brief clinical encounters,
7 problem solving, and referral to the best statewide resources
8 available to meet their needs. The service must become conversant
9 with providers across the state that are trained in evidence-based
10 trauma therapy and establish relationships to ensure specific
11 knowledge of available resources.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The University of Washington department of
13 psychiatry and behavioral sciences shall develop a best practice
14 guide for therapy for gun violence victims in collaboration with the
15 harborview center for sexual assault and traumatic stress. The guide
16 must summarize the state of the knowledge in this area and provide
17 recommendations for areas of focus and action that are meaningful and
18 practical for different constituencies. The guide must be made
19 available to the public online and disseminated across the state to
20 appropriate entities including but not limited to medical examiner's
21 offices, prosecuting attorneys, level one and level two trauma
22 centers, and victim support organizations.

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