

SENATE RESOLUTION

8646

By Senators Saldaña, Hasegawa, Kauffman, Kuderer, and Valdez

1       WHEREAS, Elijah Lee Lewis was a beloved member of the Seattle  
2 community, born and raised in the Central District, and a proud  
3 alumnus of Rainier Beach High School; and

4       WHEREAS, Elijah dedicated his life to serving his community and  
5 empowering those around him, creating spaces for peace, growth, and  
6 justice, and was a fierce advocate for social justice, leading  
7 movements that challenged systemic racism, gun violence, and  
8 inequality; and

9       WHEREAS, Elijah further exemplified his skills in  
10 entrepreneurship by owning a local cleaning business and financial  
11 group and engaging with events designed to attract further Black  
12 business owners and diversify the Seattle economy; and

13       WHEREAS, Through community outreach, Elijah consistently planned  
14 events throughout the Central District and Rainier Valley, working  
15 with Black vendors, artists, poets, and entertainers; and

16       WHEREAS, Elijah's love of community drove him to stand up tall  
17 where adults failed and in 2018, as a senior in high school, he spoke  
18 in front of thousands of people at the Seattle March for Our Lives  
19 protest to call for change in light of government inaction towards  
20 gun violence and the unregulated proliferation of firearms and  
21 assault weapons in the United States; and

22       WHEREAS, Elijah was a significant community leader in the Black  
23 Lives Matter Protest Movement of 2020, protesting the criminal legal

1 system's disproportionate impact on Black and brown Americans  
2 and systemic racism within the United States following the death  
3 of George Floyd; and

4 WHEREAS, Elijah's dedication to his community and his  
5 tireless work to promote social justice made him an inspiration  
6 to many making his leadership and activism evident in the  
7 student-led movement against gun violence, the Black Lives  
8 Matter protests, and his work with the Africatown Community Land  
9 Trust; and

10 WHEREAS, Elijah and other community leaders focused on  
11 ending gun violence and supporting well-being in Black  
12 communities and families globally came together around 17 shared  
13 principles called the Covenant with a shared goal of safety,  
14 harmony, and peace for all; and

15 WHEREAS, Elijah's tragic death at the hands of gun violence  
16 has left a profound void in the hearts of all who knew him,  
17 which reminds us of the devastating impacts of gun violence and  
18 the urgent need for meaningful action to prevent further loss of  
19 life; and

20 WHEREAS, Elijah's death at only 23 years of age is one of  
21 too many exemplifying the devastating impacts of gun violence in  
22 American culture and the disproportionate racial impacts gun  
23 violence has on our society. Black Americans are twice as likely  
24 as white Americans to die from gun violence and 14 times more  
25 likely than white Americans to be wounded;

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State  
27 Senate honor Elijah Lee Lewis for his remarkable contributions  
28 to our communities and his unwavering commitment to social  
29 justice; and

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate  
31 acknowledge the devastating impacts of gun violence and  
32 recognize the need for meaningful action to prevent further loss  
33 of life; and

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate  
35 urge Washingtonians to commemorate the life and legacy of Elijah  
36 Lee Lewis and recognize his immeasurable impact on our  
37 communities and continue Elijah's fight for racial equity,

1 equality, and justice in the state of Washington, the United  
2 States, and our shared world.

3 I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate,  
4 do hereby certify that this is a true and  
5 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8646,  
6 adopted by the Senate  
7 April 21, 2023

8 SARAH BANNISTER  
9 Secretary of the Senate