

SHORT SUMMARY

See full report at: <http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/>



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

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2013 Senate Resolution 6 directed the Joint State Government Commission to appoint an Advisory Committee to conduct a thorough and comprehensive analysis of violent crime and mass shootings, as well as other topics related to those issues, including mental illness and treatment, firearms regulation, school security, bullying, gang-related activities, educational issues, and cultural influences, including violent video games.

The Advisory Committee recommends changes to the Mental Health Procedures Act, the Uniform Firearms Act, and statutes and practices related to violent crime. It also recommends measures to make schools safer and ways to develop awareness, education, and other strategies to reduce and prevent violent crime.

Media Recommendations relate to:

- Media coverage of incidents of violence
- Parental supervision of children's exposure to media violence
- Research on the potential correlation between simulated violence and aggressive behavior

Mental Health Recommendations relate to:

- Involuntary commitment standards
- Education and training of first responders and others who encounter persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities or other impairments when in crisis
- Insurance coverage parity for mental disorders
- Use of Medicaid expansion funds to provide more community mental health services
- Use of mental health advance directives and/or mental health powers of attorney
- Codifying Pennsylvania's existing duty to warn into a statutory requirement delineating the need and limits of a duty to protect

Responsible Gun Ownership Recommendations relate to:

- Re-writing the Uniform Firearms Act in a clear, concise manner that allows a layperson to more easily find and understand current law
- Background checks
- Location bans
- Disqualifications from gun ownerships
- Enforcement of disqualifications
- Firearms safety
- Reporting lost or stolen firearms
- Relief from firearms disqualifications

School Safety Recommendations relate to:

- School safety audits
- School annual safety plans
- Use of school resource officers
- Threat assessment and crisis response teams
- Multi-threat safety drills
- Student assistance programs
- Maintaining a safe school environment
- Mental health services for students
- Treatment of "persistently dangerous schools"
- Crime reporting by schools
- Funding and audits of school safety and violence prevention programs