



ORDINANCE NO. 28624

1 BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS MELLO
2 AND USHKA

3 AN ORDINANCE relating to the tax code; imposing a tax on engaging in the
4 business of making retail sales of firearms and ammunition; amending
5 Subtitle 6A of the Tacoma Municipal Code by adding thereto a new
6 Chapter 6A.120, to be known as "Firearms and Ammunition Tax"; and
7 establishing an effective date.

8 WHEREAS, in 2017, 39,773 people died from gun-related injuries in the
9 United States, and

10 WHEREAS three quarters of all murders and approximately half of all
11 suicides in the United States in 2017 involved a firearm, and

12 WHEREAS, of the 22 homicides that have occurred in Tacoma in 2019,
13 19 involved firearms, and

14 WHEREAS, from 2014 to 2018, there has been an increase of 37 percent in
15 the number of criminal offenses in Tacoma involving firearms, and

16 WHEREAS, every year, 600 American women are shot to death by intimate
17 partners, and

18 WHEREAS, of all women shot to death by others in the United States, half
19 were shot by their intimate partners, and

20 WHEREAS basic research and prevention programs can reduce long-term
21 costs and save lives, but often need funding to get started, and

22 WHEREAS, due to successful efforts by the gun lobbyists, funding for
23 research into the causes of gun violence has been blocked at the federal level since
24 1996, and
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1 WHEREAS the creation of a revenue source through a tax on the sale of
2 firearms and ammunition would provide public benefits for residents of Tacoma
3 related to gun violence by providing a portion of the funds needed for programs that
4 promote public safety, prevent gun violence, and address, in part, the cost of gun
5 violence in the City, and
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7 WHEREAS the revenue generated from this tax will be used to offset a
8 portion of the impact and cost that gun violence has on our community by being
9 directed toward programs that promote public safety, prevent gun violence, target
10 youth and young adult violence prevention, and other programs intended to reduce
11 violence and promote community healing, and
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13 WHEREAS the proposed tax would be based on an ordinance passed in the
14 City of Seattle, which has been upheld by the Washington State Supreme Court,
15 and constitutes a tax of \$25.00 per firearm sold at retail; \$0.02 per round of
16 ammunition .22 caliber or less; and \$0.05 per round of other ammunition sold at
17 retail, and
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19 WHEREAS, further, the City Council is directing the City Manager, within
20 75 calendar days of the date of this ordinance, to bring recommendations to the
21 City Council that:
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23 (1) assist and empower our local communities faced with gun violence,
24 potentially in partnership with other agencies and entities, to help them heal from
25 the damage caused by gun violence in our community, and to develop strategies
26 together to further reduce youth and young adult gun violence;



1 (2) make recommendations for programming with youth and young adults,
2 ages 18-30, to reduce gun violence with concepts such as community court or
3 restorative justice and gang prevention and gang violence reduction for individuals
4 not in a felony situation, after consultation with partners, and

5 (3) any other recommendations to reduce gun violence in our community,
6 including state and federal legislative priorities and other measures to be led locally
7 to improve gun safety and ensure that guns do not get into the wrong hands, and

8 **(4) make recommendations on how to use the funds raised from this tax to**
9 **assist in developing and implementing a gun buyback program, and**
10

11 WHEREAS this proposed tax, if adopted, would go into effect January 1,
12 2020; Now, Therefore,

13 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

14 Section 1. That the City finds and declares that gun violence directly affects
15 the City and its residents. Therefore, the City intends to exercise its taxing
16 authority, as granted by the Washington State Constitution, as authorized by the
17 Washington State Legislature, and as affirmed by the Washington State Supreme
18 Court in *Watson et al v. City of Seattle*, 189 Wn.2d 149 (2017), to raise general
19 revenue for the City and to use that revenue to provide broad-based public benefits
20 for the residents of Tacoma related to gun violence by funding programs that
21 promote public safety, prevent gun violence, target youth and young adult violence
22 prevention, and other programs intended to reduce violence and promote
23 community healing and address, in part, the cost of gun violence in the City.
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1 Section 2. That Subtitle 6A of the Tacoma Municipal Code is hereby
2 amended by the addition thereof of a new Chapter 6A.120, to be known and
3 designated as "Firearms and Ammunition Tax," to read as set forth in the attached
4 Exhibit "A."

5 Section 3. That the taxes authorized in Section 2 of this ordinance shall
6 become effective January 1, 2020.

7 Section 4. That the City Manager is hereby directed, within 75 calendar days
8 of the date of this ordinance, to bring recommendations to the City Council that:

9 (1) assist and empower our local communities faced with gun violence,
10 potentially in partnership with other agencies and entities, to help them heal from
11 the damage caused by gun violence in our community, and to develop strategies
12 together to further reduce youth and young adult gun violence;

13 (2) make recommendations for programming with youth and young adults,
14 ages 18-30, to reduce gun violence with concepts such as community court or
15 restorative justice and gang prevention and gang violence reduction for individuals
16 not in a felony situation, after consultation with partners; **and**

17 (3) make any other recommendations to reduce gun violence in our
18 community, including state and federal legislative priorities and other measures to
19 be led locally to improve gun safety and ensure that guns do not get into the wrong
20 hands; **and**
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(4) make recommendations on how to use the funds raised from this tax to assist in developing and implementing a gun buyback program.

Passed _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney