

THE ECONOMIC COST OF GUN VIOLENCE IN FLORIDA

In recent years, Florida has experienced an average of 827 gun-related homicides, 1,538 gun-related suicides, 1,694 nonfatal interpersonal shootings, and an additional 1,773 unintentional shootings per year.¹ **Florida has some of the country's weakest gun laws and has experienced some of the worst gun tragedies in the nation's history, from the school shooting in Parkland to the Pulse nightclub attack in Orlando.** Gun violence exacts an unbearably high physical and emotional toll on families and communities from all walks of life, and while we often hear about the heartbreak and injury these shootings cause, there's another aspect of the gun violence epidemic that doesn't receive as much attention: the overwhelming financial cost.

TALLYING THE NUMBERS

The more than 6,000 shootings each year in Florida are a serious drain on the economy. Based on the gun violence-related expenses we can directly measure, including **healthcare costs** (\$228 million per year), **law enforcement and criminal justice expenses** (\$383 million per year), **costs to employers** (\$29 million per year), and **lost income** (nearly \$4.4 billion per year), the initial price tag of gun violence in Florida is over **\$5 billion per year**. Much of these costs are paid by the public, in part because up to 85% of gunshot victims are either uninsured or on some form of publicly funded insurance. Additionally, law enforcement efforts are funded entirely by taxpayer dollars. **As a result, the annual cost of gun violence to Florida taxpayers is approximately \$950 million.**²

PARKLAND AND THE NEED TO TAKE ACTION TO SAVE LIVES

Seventeen precious lives were cut short in a matter of minutes at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Valentine's Day 2018 in Parkland, Florida. As the entire nation comes to grips with this heartbreaking loss, Floridians must grapple with the fact that, **if 2018 is anything like recent years, another 2,400 lives will be taken by guns before the year's end.** That's the equivalent of 141 more Parkland massacres within the span of a single year.

The students of Stoneman Douglas High School have courageously, and collectively, called out for action, demanding lawmakers stand up to the NRA and change gun laws to prevent future tragedies. The shooter at Stoneman Douglas was a troubled 19-year-old boy who, thanks to the incredibly weak gun laws of this state, lawfully purchased multiple firearms, including an AR-15. If Florida laws had made it harder for this disturbed young person to build up an arsenal of deadly weaponry, the disaster in Parkland might never have happened.

It's time for our elected leaders to listen to the wisdom of our kids. We owe it to everyone at Stoneman Douglas and the thousands of other victims of gun violence across Florida to do better.

\$5+
BILLION
TOTAL DIRECTLY
MEASURABLE
COSTS

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When the reduced quality of life attributable to pain and suffering (\$9.1 billion) is considered, **the overall estimate of the economic cost of gun violence rises to \$14.1 billion per year.** While this number is staggering, it actually understates the true cost of gun violence in Florida because it doesn't include significant, yet difficult-to-measure costs, including lost business opportunities, lowered property values, the fear that communities experience on a daily basis, and reductions in the tax base as residents flee from areas that are perceived as unsafe.

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

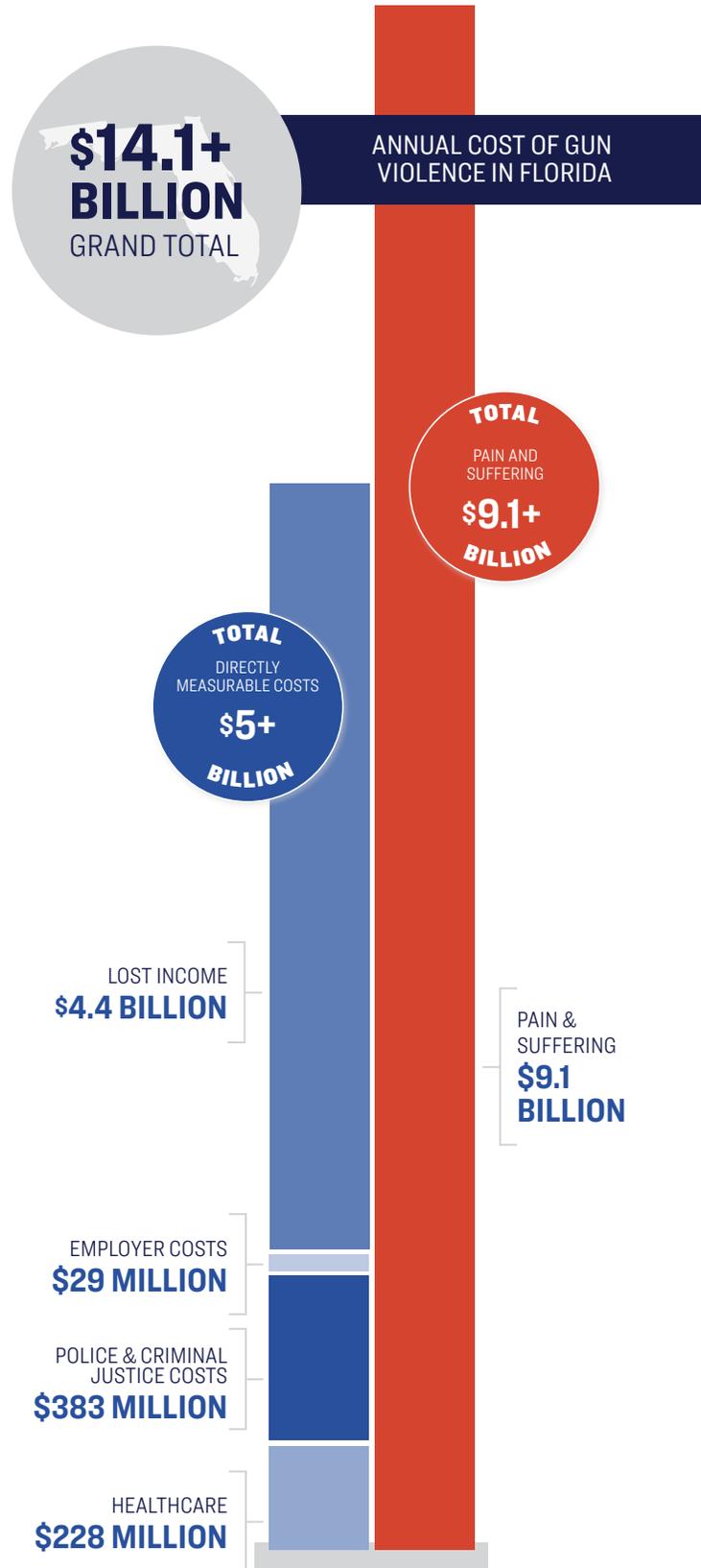
There's much work to be done. Fortunately, a number of proven solutions exist that would reduce gun violence in Florida, including universal background checks for all gun sales, limiting access to military-style weapons and large-capacity ammunition magazines, and evidence-based violence intervention strategies that interrupt the cycle of street violence. The investment required to implement these lifesaving solutions is minuscule compared to the yearly cost of gun violence in the state.

1. Fatal firearm injury data came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports (<http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>). Nonfatal firearm injuries came from the Florida Department of Public Health's Injury Surveillance System (<http://www.floridahealth.gov/statistics-and-data/florida-injury-surveillance-system/index.html>).
2. Estimates of the cost of gun violence in Florida were created using a model of the cost of gun violence published in 2012 by economists at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). PIRE is a nonprofit research organization that focuses on using scientific research to inform public policy. This model can be found at <http://www.pire.org/documents/gswcost2010.pdf>. All cost estimates were adjusted to 2016 dollars.

WE'RE ON A MISSION TO SAVE LIVES

For nearly 25 years, the legal experts at Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence have been fighting for a safer America by researching, drafting, and defending the laws, policies, and programs proven to save lives from gun violence. Founded in the wake of a 1993 mass shooting in San Francisco, in 2016 the Law Center joined with former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords to form a courageous new force for gun safety that stretches coast to coast.

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