

THE ECONOMIC COST OF GUN VIOLENCE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

In recent years, New Hampshire has experienced an average of 123 gun deaths and dozens of nonfatal shootings per year.¹ New Hampshire has the 11th lowest gun death rate among the states, yet **gun violence exacts a high physical, emotional, and financial toll on families and communities in the state.** We often hear about the heartbreak and physical pain these shootings cause, but there is another aspect of the gun violence epidemic that doesn't receive as much attention: the overwhelming financial cost.

TALLYING THE NUMBERS

The hundreds of shootings that occur each year in New Hampshire are a serious drain on the state's economy. Based on the expenses we can directly measure, including **healthcare costs** (\$8 million per year), **law enforcement and criminal justice expenses** (\$5 million per year), **costs to employers** (\$1 million per year), and **lost income** (\$194 million per year), the initial price tag of gun violence in New Hampshire is over **\$208 million per year.** Much of this tab is picked up by the public. Up to 85% of gunshot victims, for example, 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 direct annual cost of gun violence to New Hampshire taxpayers is over \$29 million.**²

GUN VIOLENCE IS BAD FOR BUSINESS

New Hampshire's business community is severely impacted by the negative consequences of gun violence. Shootings engender fear in affected neighborhoods, keeping potential customers away and forcing businesses to relocate or limit hours of operation.

A 2016 report by the Urban Institute found that in Washington DC each additional homicide was associated with the loss of two retail or service establishments in the following year.

In March 2019, commerce in a bustling commercial neighborhood in Manchester ground to a halt when gunmen opened fire on police and barricaded themselves in a nearby motel. The incident claimed three lives and blocked access to the area—filled with car dealerships, retail stores, and restaurants—for the duration of the 15-hour stand-off. With tragic shootings occurring every year in New Hampshire, it's easy to see how the economy is directly impacted by gun violence.



\$208+
MILLION
TOTAL DIRECTLY
MEASURABLE
COSTS

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When the reduced quality of life attributable to pain and suffering (\$396 million) is considered, the overall estimate of the economic cost of gun violence rises to **\$604 million per year**. While this number is staggering, it actually understates the true cost of gun violence in New Hampshire because it doesn't include significant, yet difficult-to-measure costs, including lost business opportunities, lowered property values, and reductions in the tax base.

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

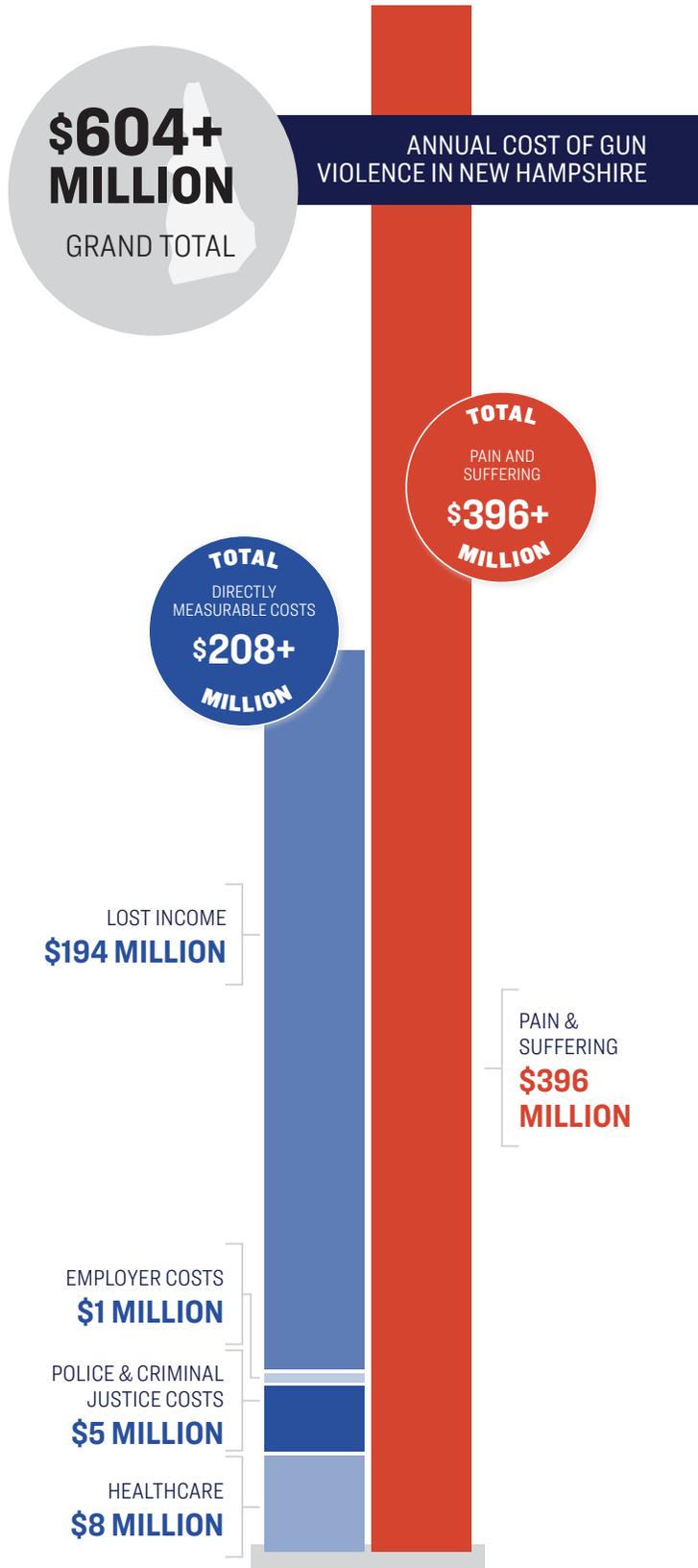
There is much work to be done. Fortunately, a number of proven solutions exist that would reduce gun violence in New Hampshire, including requiring background checks for all firearm purchases, creating a waiting period prior to the purchase of all firearms, and passing extreme risk protection order legislation. 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 (www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html). Nonfatal firearm injuries were estimated using tool which creates a ratio of the national incidence of nonfatal shootings, sourced from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System's Firearm Injury Surveillance Study (NEISS-FISS), and the number of fatal shootings that New Hampshire experienced in a given year, sourced from WISQARS. NEISS-FISS data is available at www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/series/198#studies.
2. Estimates of the cost of gun violence in New Hampshire 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 www.pire.org/documents/gswcost2010.pdf. All cost estimates were adjusted to 2016 dollars.

WE'RE ON A MISSION TO SAVE LIVES

For 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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