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**City of Milwaukee Health Department Statement on 'National Day to Demand Action'
*Commissioner of Health calls for action on this public health crisis***

MILWAUKEE – Today, on this National Day to Demand Action, the City of Milwaukee Health Department joins a nationwide call to action and urges citizens to contact their members of Congress in support of universal background checks for all gun sales.

Gun violence is a leading causes of injury, disability, and death in this country – and is the No. 1 killer of young African-American males nationwide. Apart from the physical trauma suffered by victims of gun violence, which costs the country billions of dollars each year, the consequences to victims and those exposed to violence include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, substance abuse and other long-term health problems.

There is no one solution to ending violence in our communities, but one thing is clear: Violence is preventable.

The evidence-based approaches advocated by public health experts are saving millions of lives from motor vehicle crashes and injury. These practices – including quality research, multidisciplinary expertise and evaluation – have been effective in controlling infectious diseases, food-borne illnesses, and reducing rates of teen pregnancy. These approaches can also help reduce the toll of deaths and injuries from gun violence.

Like the eradication of disease or the reduction of infant mortality, it will take a long-term commitment to create change. We must support preventive steps to reducing violence. Expanded background checks for firearm purchases, and increased funding for violence prevention research will be essential tools toward improving the safety of our communities.

For more information, visit www.DemandAction.org.

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Think Health. Act Now!

