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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8020

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State of Washington                      62nd Legislature                      2012 1st Special Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Litzow, Carrell, Kohl-Welles, Chase, and Roach

Read first time 03/21/12. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1            TO THE HONORABLE RANDY DORN, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,  
2 THE DIRECTORS OF ALL LICENSED CHILD CARE, PRESCHOOL, AND EARLY LEARNING  
3 PROGRAMS, AND THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN  
4 WASHINGTON STATE:

5            We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
7 represent and petition as follows:

8            WHEREAS, The loss of a child as the result of a firearms accident  
9 is a tragic event made worse because it is often preventable; and

10           WHEREAS, Federal officials estimate that our nation has  
11 approximately two hundred million or more firearms in private ownership  
12 that are potential accidents waiting to happen in the hands of an  
13 unsuspecting child; and

14           WHEREAS, Many children play with toy guns that closely resemble  
15 real weapons and watch television programs and movies that routinely  
16 portray the irresponsible and unsafe handling of guns, which are  
17 factors that tend to blur the distinction between make-believe and  
18 reality, and encourage unsafe behavior; and

19           WHEREAS, The National Rifle Association, education professionals,  
20 urban housing safety officials, clinical psychologists, and law

1 enforcement working together have developed the Eddie Eagle Gun Safety  
2 Program designed for children in prekindergarten through third grade;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Eddie Eagle Gun Safety Program intends to ensure that  
5 children stay safe should they encounter a gun and never mentions the  
6 National Rifle Association or encourages children to buy guns or become  
7 Association members; and

8 WHEREAS, Since the program began in 1988, the Gun Safety Program  
9 has reached more than twenty-one million children, in all fifty states;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Participating children receive certificates of merit and  
12 stickers and posters of Eddie Eagle, the program's lovable feathered  
13 mascot, in addition to important safety training that could save a  
14 life; and

15 WHEREAS, Available free or at nominal cost, this program is gaining  
16 popularity in many of our state's school districts and police  
17 departments; and

18 WHEREAS, Teaching children to act safely around firearms is a  
19 critical educational step in the effort to reduce the number of  
20 firearms accidents among children;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that licensed  
22 child care, preschool, and early learning programs, and the school  
23 districts of the State of Washington promote the use of the Eddie Eagle  
24 Gun Safety Program in our licensed child care, preschool, and early  
25 learning programs, and schools to help prevent firearms accidents among  
26 children.

27 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
28 transmitted to the Honorable Randy Dorn, the directors of all licensed  
29 child care, preschool, and early learning programs, the Superintendent  
30 of Public Instruction, and the Superintendent of each public school  
31 district in Washington State.

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