

SENATE RESOLUTION

8646

By Senator Saldaña

1 WHEREAS, Elijah Lee Lewis was a beloved member of the Seattle
2 community, born and raised in the Central District, and a proud
3 alumnus of Rainier Beach High School; and

4 WHEREAS, Elijah dedicated his life to serving his community and
5 empowering those around him, creating spaces for peace, growth, and
6 justice, and was a fierce advocate for social justice, leading
7 movements that challenged systemic racism, gun violence, and
8 inequality; and

9 WHEREAS, Elijah further exemplified his skills in
10 entrepreneurship by owning a local cleaning business and financial
11 group and engaging with events designed to attract further Black
12 business owners and diversify the Seattle economy; and

13 WHEREAS, Through community outreach, Elijah consistently planned
14 events throughout the Central District and Rainier Valley, working
15 with Black vendors, artists, poets, and entertainers; and

16 WHEREAS, Elijah's love of community drove him to stand up tall
17 where adults failed and in 2018, as a senior in high school, he spoke
18 in front of thousands of people at the Seattle March for Our Lives
19 protest to call for change in light of government inaction towards
20 gun violence and the unregulated proliferation of firearms and
21 assault weapons in the United States; and

22 WHEREAS, Elijah was a significant community leader in the Black
23 Lives Matter Protest Movement of 2020, protesting the criminal legal

1 system's disproportionate impact on Black and brown Americans and
2 systemic racism within the United States following the death of
3 George Floyd; and

4 WHEREAS, Elijah's dedication to his community and his tireless
5 work to promote social justice made him an inspiration to many making
6 his leadership and activism evident in the student-led movement
7 against gun violence, the Black Lives Matter protests, and his work
8 with the Africatown Community Land Trust; and

9 WHEREAS, Lewis and other community leaders focused on ending gun
10 violence and supporting well-being in Black communities and families
11 globally came together around 17 shared principles called the
12 Covenant with a shared goal of safety, harmony, and peace for all;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Elijah's tragic death at the hands of gun violence has
15 left a profound void in the hearts of all who knew him, which reminds
16 us of the devastating impacts of gun violence and the urgent need for
17 meaningful action to prevent further loss of life; and

18 WHEREAS, Elijah's death at only 23 years of age is one of too
19 many exemplifying the devastating impacts of gun violence in American
20 culture and the disproportionate racial impacts gun violence has on
21 our society. Black Americans are twice as likely as white Americans
22 to die from gun violence and 14 times more likely than white
23 Americans to be wounded;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
25 honor Elijah Lee Lewis for his remarkable contributions to our
26 communities and his unwavering commitment to social justice; and

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
28 acknowledge the devastating impacts of gun violence and recognize the
29 need for meaningful action to prevent further loss of life; and

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate urge
31 Washingtonians to commemorate the life and legacy of Elijah Lee Lewis
32 and recognize his immeasurable impact on our communities and continue
33 Elijah's fight for racial equity, equality, and justice in the state
34 of Washington, the United States, and our shared world.

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