

Legislation Text

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Recognizing June 2022 as “Gun Violence Awareness Month” in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Gun violence poses a serious and ongoing threat to safety and public health both nationally and in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, 2021 was Philadelphia’s deadliest year on record, and gun violence caused the overwhelming majority of the more than 562 homicides the city recorded that year; and

WHEREAS, Gun suicide claims the lives of nearly 24,000 people in the United States each year. According to the Center for Disease Control, the United States saw 45,222 people die from gun-related injuries in the U.S. in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens in the United States. Every year, more than 3,500 children and teens are shot and killed, and another 15,000 are shot and wounded—an average of ten children and teens shot and killed and 42 shot and wounded every day; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the United States the impact of gun violence is seen disproportionately across communities of color. In Pennsylvania, Black people are 21 times more likely than white people to die by gun homicide, compared to 10 times nationwide. Nationwide, 68 percent of Black and Latino Americans or someone they care for has experienced gun violence in their lifetime, demonstrating the impact and devastation gun violence has in communities across America; and

WHEREAS, Gun violence causes a broad range of devastating collateral consequences for shooting survivors, their families, friends, and communities. Those consequences include posttraumatic stress, permanent physical disability, and death, along with lost wages and unemployment, medical costs, foreclosures and homelessness, and community destabilization; and

WHEREAS, Analysis by the Harvard Medical School shows that people who survive a firearm injury face greater risks of mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and pain in the year following injury. The immediate family members of survivors also appear to suffer indirect but tangible harms: The significant others, parents, and children of gunshot survivors showed an increased risk of mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, gunshot survivors average \$2,495 more in health care spending per month, compared with demographically and clinically matched peers. This means that when accounting for all gunshot survivors in the U.S., direct health care spending due to these injuries amounts to some \$2.5 billion a year; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative for this Council and the citizens of Philadelphia to focus attention on the issue of gun violence and how it directly affects our community. Philadelphia’s experience indicates that intensive and sustained community-wide commitment to gun-violence prevention is necessary to make progress in this area; and

WHEREAS, All Philadelphians deserve to live their lives free of gun violence and the fear thereof. Moreover, the well-being of the City's youth and their families is of paramount importance to Philadelphia's future prosperity. Safety is a foundational requirement of that wellbeing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby designates the month of June, 2022, as "Gun Violence Awareness Month" in Philadelphia.