



City of Takoma Park, Maryland Mayoral Proclamation

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY

- WHEREAS,** every day, more than 100 Americans are killed by gun violence and on average there are more than 13,000 gun homicides every year; and
- WHEREAS,** Americans are 25 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries; and
- WHEREAS,** Maryland has 682 gun deaths every year, with a rate of 11.3 deaths per 100,000 people. Maryland has the 35th highest rate of gun deaths in the US; and
- WHEREAS,** gun homicides predominantly occur in cities, with more than half of all firearm related gun deaths in the nation occurring in 127 cities; and
- WHEREAS,** cities across the nation, including in the City of Takoma Park, are working to end the senseless violence with evidence-based solutions; and
- WHEREAS,** protecting public safety in the communities they serve is mayors' highest responsibility; and
- WHEREAS,** support for the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens goes hand-in-hand with keeping guns away from people with dangerous histories; and
- WHEREAS,** mayors and law enforcement officers know their communities best, are the most familiar with local criminal activity and how to address it, and are best positioned to understand how to keep their citizens safe; and
- WHEREAS,** the pandemic facing America has drastically impacted communities and individuals sheltering in place which may result in situations where access to firearms results in increased risk in intimate partner violence gun deaths, suicide by gun and unintentional shootings;
- WHEREAS,** in January 2013, Hadiya Pendleton, a teenager who marched in the presidential inaugural parade and was tragically shot and killed just weeks later, should be now celebrating her 23rd birthday; and

WHEREAS, to help honor Hadiya – and the more than 100 Americans whose lives are cut short every day and the countless survivors who are injured by shootings every day – a national coalition of organizations has designated June 5, 2020, the first Friday in June, as the 6th National Gun Violence Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, the idea was inspired by a group of Hadiya’s friends, who asked their classmates to commemorate her life by wearing orange; they chose this color because hunters wear orange to announce themselves to other hunters when out in the woods and orange is a color that symbolizes the value of human life; and

WHEREAS, anyone can join this campaign by pledging to Wear Orange on June 5th, the first Friday in June in 2020, to help raise awareness about gun violence; and

WHEREAS, by wearing orange on June 5, 2020 Americans will raise awareness about gun violence and honor the lives of gun violence victims and survivors; and

WHEREAS, we renew our commitment to reduce gun violence and pledge to do all we can to keep firearms out of the wrong hands, and encourage responsible gun ownership to help keep our children safe.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Kate Stewart, Mayor of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland declare the first Friday in June, June 5, 2020, to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day. I encourage all to support their local communities’ efforts to prevent the tragic effects of gun violence and to honor and value human lives.

Dated this 3rd day of June, 2020.

Kate Stewart
Mayor