



# Proclamation

## 2023 CITY PROCLAMATION DECLARING THE FIRST FRIDAY IN JUNE TO BE NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY

This proclamation declares the first Friday in June to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day in the City of Roeland Park to honor and remember all victims and survivors of gun violence and to declare that we as a country must do more to end this public health crisis.

**WHEREAS**, every day, more than 120 Americans are killed by gun violence and more than 200 are shot and wounded, with an average of more than 17,000 gun homicides every year; and

**WHEREAS**, Americans are 26 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries; and

**WHEREAS**, Kansas has on average 456 gun deaths every year, with a rate of 15.7 deaths per 100,000 people, a crisis that costs the state \$5.7 billion each year, of which \$95.1 million is paid by taxpayers. Kansas has the 21<sup>st</sup>-highest rate of gun deaths in the US; and

**WHEREAS**, gun homicides and assaults are concentrated 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 Kansas, 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 individuals goes hand-in-hand with keeping guns away from people with dangerous histories; and

**WHEREAS**, mayors and law enforcement officers —in partnership with local violence intervention activists and resources —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 residents safe; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence prevention is more important than ever as we see an increase in firearm homicides, and nonfatal shootings across the country, increased calls to domestic violence hotlines, and an increase in city gun violence;

**WHEREAS**, in January 2013, Hadiya Pendleton was tragically shot and killed at age 15; and on June 2, 2023, to recognize the 26th birthday of Hadiya Pendleton (born: June 2, 1997), people across the United States will recognize National Gun Violence Awareness Day and wear orange in tribute to -

(1) Hadiya Pendleton and other victims of gun violence; and

(2) the loved ones of those victims; 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 2nd, the first Friday in June in 2023, to help raise awareness about gun violence; and

**WHEREAS**, by wearing orange on June 2, 2023 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 hands of people who should not have access to them, and encourage responsible gun ownership to help keep our families and communities safe.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Michael Poppa, Mayor of the City of Roeland Park, Kansas, do hereby proclaim June 2, 2023, to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day. I encourage individuals in Roeland Park, and across the state of Kansas, to support their local communities' efforts to prevent the tragic effects of gun violence and to honor and value human lives.

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Michael Poppa, Mayor