

Wear Orange 2023 Proclamation
DECLARING JUNE 2 TO BE GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY

WHEREAS, in Connecticut during 2022 there were 241 gun deaths, the highest toll in more than 15 years; and

WHEREAS, community gun violence accounts for a majority of gun homicides in Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, firearms are the second-leading cause of suicide in Connecticut and account for half of all Connecticut gun deaths; and

WHEREAS, as of early May in the United States there have been an average of more than one mass shooting every day; and

WHEREAS, more than 80 percent of child firearm suicides use a gun belonging to a family member and two-thirds of school shooters obtain the gun they used from their home or the home of a relative; and

WHEREAS, abused women are five times more likely to be killed if the abuser owns a firearm and nearly 1 million women have reported being shot at by an intimate partner; and

WHEREAS, in Connecticut, it's estimated that from 2012 to 2017 more than 3,700 firearms were stolen from individuals; an average of 12 thefts per week; and WHEREAS, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms reports that theft is a "significant avenue" by which firearms end up in the hands of criminals; and

WHEREAS, exposure to gun violence is a form of toxic stress that can change a child's brain development and lead to lifelong consequences, including decreased academic performance, chronic health problems, substance abuse and unstable employment.

WHEREAS, beyond the loss of life, the emotional and physical pain suffered by survivors and the profound impact on communities where gun violence is pervasive, gun violence has tremendous economic consequences, costing Connecticut taxpayers up to \$90 million annually, more than \$430 million in direct costs and \$1.2 billion in societal costs; and

WHEREAS, this June 2 would have been the 26th birthday of Hadiya Pendleton, an innocent teen who was mistaken as a rival gang member and shot and killed by gang members while with friends in a Chicago park, following which Hadiya's friends chose to Wear Orange on her birthday because hunters wear the color orange to protect themselves; and

WHEREAS, by participating in Wear Orange activities we call attention to the crisis of gun violence and signal our commitment to reducing gun violence in all its forms. NOW THEREFORE I, Daniel E. Carter, First Selectman, do hereby declare June 2, 2023 Gun Violence Awareness Day in Bethel, Connecticut.

