

Gun Violence Prevention & Awareness Month and NC S.A.F.E. Week of Action

WHEREAS, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, there were more than 48,000 firearm-related deaths in the United States in 2022 according to provisional mortality data; and

WHEREAS, data indicates about 132 people die from a firearm-related injury each day with more than half being suicides and more than four out of every 10 homicides; and

WHEREAS, Americans are 26 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries with firearms being the leading cause of death for American children and teens, with no other peer nation having firearm deaths in the top causes of mortality; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Buncombe County Register of Deeds recorded 51 death certificates that showed someone died by a gun; and

WHEREAS, 46 of those incidents occurred inside Buncombe County with the youngest decedent only 14 years old, while the oldest was 94 years old; and

WHEREAS, communities across the nation, including Buncombe County, are working to end deaths by guns, including suicides, accidents, and gun violence with evidence-based solutions; and

WHEREAS, support for the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding residents goes hand-in-hand with promoting gun ownership safety and keeping guns away from people with dangerous histories; and

WHEREAS, all gun owners in North Carolina have a responsibility to safely store their firearms, which helps to prevent accidents as well as theft; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, Buncombe County's Justice Services Department has partnered with community-based organizations to pilot community safety initiatives directed toward healing, support, practical resources, and a reduction in violence for our communities with the highest rates of gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the Justice Services Department continues to partner with community-based organizations to implement a Community-Based Public Health Response to Violence, offering training and support for Community Health Worker-Violence Prevention Professionals, youth leadership development, and building a multi-sectoral coalition to prevent and respond to community violence; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County's Health and Human Services Department seeks to strengthen our community by advancing health, safety, and opportunity including preventing injury and death by promoting the health and well-being of populations through the use of data, research, and effective policies and partnerships; and

WHEREAS, we recognize survivors of gun violence, honor the lives lost to gun violence in Buncombe County, commit to reducing gun violence, and pledge to do all we can to keep firearms out of the wrong hands and encourage gun owners to commit to safely storing their guns using approved measures.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners recognizes June 2 - 8 as **NC S.A.F.E. Week of Action** and **June 2024** to be **Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month**.

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners