



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New Yorkers share the vision of a better world for people of all races, religions, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and political viewpoints – and we are committed to making our communities safer places to live, work, and visit – where crime, violence, and hatred have no place; and

Whereas, we continue to be horrified by the increased incidence of gun violence at schools, college campuses, hospitals, movie theatres, restaurants, municipal centers, places of worship, and other venues with access to the public, such as grocery stores – and only last month our nation stood in shock over the mass shooting here in New York State, when a racist and hate-motivated killing in a Buffalo supermarket left ten people dead and three injured; just nine days later, our hearts were filled with pain and disbelief as the death toll from a gun attack at an elementary school in Texas climbed to twenty-one, among the victims, nineteen schoolchildren; and

Whereas, in the United States of America, people are 26 times more likely to die by gun-related homicide than those in other developed countries and, on average, there are nearly 16,000 gun-related homicides every year; tragically, more than 110 individuals are killed by gun violence each day, along with more than 200 who are shot and wounded; and

Whereas, on average, there are 870 gun deaths every year in New York State, with a rate of 4.3 deaths per 100,000 people; ensuring public safety in our communities is among the greatest responsibilities of individuals serving at all levels of government and, as part of a major safety initiative, our State has undertaken a three-part agenda aimed at preventing and reducing gun violence and violent crime, focusing on: investing in resources for State and local law enforcement's gun safety efforts, partnering with localities and neighboring states to crack down on illegal gun trafficking, and tripling the State's investment in community-based gun violence responses; and

Whereas, the gun violence epidemic constitutes a public health emergency and New York State has established a new Office of Gun Violence Prevention within the New York State Department of Health to collaborate with the Executive Chamber, the Division of Criminal Justice Services, and other state agencies, along with community partners and law enforcement, to use data and science to identify steps that can be taken to curb gun violence, to track emerging gun violence trends, and deploy critical resources; the State has also created the Interstate Task Force on Illegal Guns, in partnership with the New York City Mayor's Office and the NYPD, to bring together law enforcement officials from nine Northeastern states to tackle the urgent issue of gun tracing and fight the scourge of illegal guns on our streets; and

Whereas, through an "all-of-government" approach, New York State will develop new strategies to treat gun violence as a public health crisis, engaging youth with positive educational, recreational, and employment opportunities, using short-term solutions to manage the immediate gun violence crisis, as well as long-term solutions that focus on community-based intervention and prevention strategies to break the cycle of violence, and working to get guns off the street and strengthen the relationship between police and the communities they serve; and

Whereas, gun violence prevention is more important than ever as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate gun violence after more than two years of increased gun sales, increased calls to suicide and domestic violence hotlines, and increased gun violence within many cities in New York State; and

Whereas, National Gun Violence Awareness Day is commemorated on the first Friday of June, this year on the 3rd, a date chosen to honor the memory of Hadiya Pendleton who, in 2013, was killed at the age of 15 while standing in a Chicago park, a week after performing at President Obama's second inauguration; in the wake of her death, Hadiya's friends started the "Wear Orange" initiative, asking people to wear orange – a symbol of human life – in remembrance of all victims and survivors of gun violence, with New York State lighting public buildings and landmarks orange in solidarity with this cause; and

Whereas, all New Yorkers join in this critical effort by renewing our commitment to reduce gun violence, vowing to do all we can to keep firearms out of the wrong hands, and encouraging responsible gun ownership to help keep our children and families safe;

Now, Therefore, I, Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim June 2022 as

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

in the Empire State and urge all people to support their community's efforts to prevent the tragic effects of gun violence and to wear orange to honor those lives lost in senseless acts of hatred and malice.



Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this first day of June in the year two thousand twenty-two.

Secretary to the Governor
Karen Persichilli Keogh

Governor