

**2024 CITY OF WESTWOOD HILLS 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 Westwood Hills 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, on average, more than 50 Americans are killed by gun violence and approximately 100 are shot and wounded, with more than 18,000 gun homicides reported in 2023; and

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

**WHEREAS**, based on the five-year average over the period 2018-2022, Kansas has 463 gun deaths every year, with a rate of 15.9 deaths per 100,000 people, a crisis that costs the state billions of dollars each year. Over that same period, Kansas also 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 firearms related gun deaths in the nation occurring in 127 cities; and

**WHEREAS**, cities across the nation, including Westwood Hills, 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—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 citizens 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 7, 2024 to recognize the 27th 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, choosing this color because hunters wear orange to announce themselves to other hunters when out in the woods and because 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 7th, the first Friday in June in 2024, to help raise awareness about gun violence; and

**WHEREAS**, by wearing orange on June 7, 2024, 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 to encourage responsible gun ownership to help keep our families and communities safe.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Mayor Rosemary Podrebarac of the city of Westwood Hills, Kansas, declares the first Friday in June, June 7, 2024, to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day. I encourage all citizens to support their local communities' efforts to prevent the tragic effects of gun violence and to honor and value human lives.

DATED this 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024



  
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Mayor Rosemary Podrebarac