

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF COMMON SENSE GUN LAWS AND OPPOSING LEGISLATION THAT THREATENS PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilor Sponsor: Bahl-Milne, Devlin Gauthier, Griesemer, Miller, and Walker

WHEREAS, on April 27th, 2021 President Biden declared gun violence in the United States a public health epidemic; and

WHEREAS, our communities, including schools, grocery stores, and houses of worship should be places of safety, peace, and community, not fear and danger; and

WHEREAS, since 2009, there have been 279 mass shootings in the United States, resulting in 1576 people shot and killed and 1046 people shot and wounded; and
(<https://everytownresearch.org/maps/mass-shootings-in-america/>)

WHEREAS, the gun homicide rate in the United States is 26 times higher than that of other developed countries, with more than 110 Americans being killed by gun violence every day and more than 200 being shot and wounded, including firearm-related injuries as the number one cause of death of children and adolescents ages 1 to 19; and

WHEREAS, gun violence disproportionately harms historically exploited communities, with Black Americans being 10 times more likely and Latinx Americans being two times more likely than white Americans to die by gun homicide each year, and women being 28 times more likely to be killed by guns than women in other high-income countries; and

WHEREAS, since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012, there have been 948 school shootings in the United States; and (<https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/blog/gun-violence/16-facts-about-gun-violence-and-school-shootings/>)

WHEREAS, the presence of armed school resource officers (SROs) has not been shown to reduce gun-related incidents or violence in schools but can cause students to feel less safe, **can criminalize minor misbehavior, and can** lead to more suspensions and expulsions, particularly of BIPOC students.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council strongly supports federal, state, and local officials and grassroots activists advocating for and passing common sense gun legislation, directing funding towards programs that reduce gun violence in communities and schools, and opposing legislation that increases gun-related violence and threatens public **safety**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council asks state officials to look at the pension funds and divest from the companies that manufacture, distribute or sell firearms, ammunition and accessories.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council supports the Amherst School District and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee in their commitments to indefinitely continuing to not employ the use of school resource officers (SROs) in all of **their** schools; and encourages the Amherst Police Department and Community Responders for Equity, Safety, and Service (CRESS) to work together to reduce gun presence when responding to non-violent related calls.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council ask that the State pass H 4869 an Act Relative to 3-D Printed Guns and H 2439 to prohibit ghost guns, so-called, that allow gun pieces to be legally purchased or made to create firearms that lack serial numbers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Amherst Town Council shall cause a copy of this Resolution to be sent to President Joe Biden, Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, Representative

Jim McGovern, Governor Charlie Baker, State Senator Jo Comerford, and State Representative Mindy Domb.

**A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO SAFE AND LEGAL
ABORTION IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS AND ACROSS THE
UNITED STATES**

Council Sponsor: Councilors Devlin Gauthier and Miller

WHEREAS, on June 24th, 2022, The Supreme Court of the United States ruled on *Dobbs v. Jackson* in a decision which overturned *Roe v. Wade* and eliminated over 50 years of the federal constitutional right to abortion, removing the rights of millions of individuals to make their own decisions regarding their reproductive health; and

WHEREAS, in a 2019 resolution, [hyperlink](#) the Amherst Town Council affirmed the belief that reproductive health care, including abortion, is a vital component of overall health; and

WHEREAS, individuals' right to make their own personal medical decisions about when or whether to have children must be safeguarded; and

WHEREAS, abortion is an essential reproductive health service and its availability is an important part of ensuring every individual's right to safe and accessible health care; and

WHEREAS, that right to a safe abortion has proven essential to the ability of people - including trans, non-binary, and gender nonconforming individuals - to protect their health, their lives, and the financial stability of their families; and

WHEREAS, in the week following the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision, eight states subsequently outlawed abortion care, with more states expected to follow suit; and

WHEREAS, banning abortion does not prevent abortion, it only prevents safe and legal abortions, as evidenced by the many people harmed or killed by illicit procedures in the years before *Roe v. Wade*; and

WHEREAS, reproductive rights are human rights and the majority of the American people support the right of an individual to make these personal decisions without the intervention of their government; and

WHEREAS, despite the decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson* the right to a safe abortion remains protected by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, cementing the state's status as a protector of reproductive health, and providing an avenue for those seeking reproductive care from other states to receive it; and

WHEREAS, further protecting access to safe healthcare, the Town of Amherst Police Department has codified that no officer in the Town shall cooperate in external investigations into individuals receiving or providing abortion care or gender-affirming healthcare in the Town of Amherst.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Amherst Town Council hereby reaffirms its commitment to the protection of abortion rights, reproductive health care rights, and individuals' rights to make reproductive decisions about their own bodies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Amherst Town Council hereby supports the immediate passage of Massachusetts House Bill H.4930, "An Act Expanding Protections for Reproductive Rights" and its subsequent Massachusetts Senate Bill to establish the right to an abortion and access to gender-affirming care, and to protect doctors and patients from legal action if they travel to Massachusetts from another state where abortions or gender-affirming health care are illegal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Council shall cause a copy of this resolution to be sent to U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren; U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey; U.S. Representative James P. McGovern; Massachusetts Governor Charles Baker; State Senator Joanne N. Comerford; and State Representative Mindy Domb.

Voted this ___ day of _____, 2022.

Lynn Griesemer, Town Council President