

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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County Executive Shapiro and Council recognize Gun Violence Awareness Day

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council passed a resolution recognizing June 2 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day and called on residents to honor and remember victims and survivors of gun violence. To commemorate the day and call for action, Executive Shapiro encouraged residents to wear orange in solidarity with those impacted by gun violence locally and nationally.

The [Wear Orange](#) initiative was started by the friends of Hadiya Pendleton, a 15-year-old shot and killed in Chicago in 2013. Her friends launched a national campaign in her memory to honor her and other victims and to prevent future gun violence. The color orange is worn by hunters to protect themselves and others. Wearing orange is a nod to this practice and emphasizes that all people deserve to feel safe from gun violence.

In 2021 alone, 48,830 people died due to gun violence in the United States according to Pew Research Center, a 23% increase since 2019. In both 2020 and 2021, firearms surpassed motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of death among children according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with firearms responsible for nearly 19% of deaths among children ages 1-18.

As of May 8, 2023, there had been more mass shootings in the United States than days in the year, with the Gun Violence Archive reporting 202 mass shootings, defined as a shooting where four or more people were shot, either injured or killed, not including the shooter. This includes the May 6 shooting outside a mall in Dallas, TX, the April 10 shooting at a bank in Louisville, KY, the March 27 shooting at an elementary school in Nashville, TN, the February 13 shooting at Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI, the January 21 shooting at a dance hall in Monterey Park, CA, and many more, impacting hundreds of communities and thousands of lives.

“Our nation continues to experience unmatched levels of gun violence and mass shootings. Enough is enough,” said Executive Shapiro. “Common sense gun laws are overwhelmingly supported by Americans, including gun owners. We can and must enact common sense laws to prevent future tragedies.”

In December 2022 and March 2023, Summit County Council hosted two gun buybacks, taking in hundreds of firearms and distributing hundreds of gun locks to promote safe storage. The commitment of Summit County to prevent firearms from ending up in the wrong hands, to encourage responsible and safe

ownership and use of firearms, and to reduce gun violence and keep the community safe remains steadfast. Council members and community members are hosting two gun safety events on June 2 to distribute gun locks, safe storage information and suicide prevention materials. The events will be held at Minority Behavioral Health Group from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and at Kenmore First Friday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Executive Shapiro encourages residents to wear orange on June 2 and tell their lawmakers to support simple safety measures to keep our kids, our teachers, and our loved ones safe. She also encourages residents to attend Temple Israel's event, [The Impact of Gun Violence in the Community & What you Can Do about It](#), on Sunday, June 4 at 3:00 p.m. A panel of Survivors will briefly share ways in which gun violence has impacted their lives. This will be followed by a discussion of evidence-based solutions to reducing gun violence, led by Akron-Canton Local Group Leads, which will inform residents about different ways they can act.

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