



**Memorializing Resolution of the City Council - #0017-2024**

Sponsored by: **Miguel A. Meléndez, Jr., City Council President; Willie J. Lightfoot, Sr., Councilmember At-Large**

September 11, 2024

To The Honorable  
Rochester City Council  
30 Church Street  
Rochester, New York 14614

***RE: Memorializing the Public Health Director of Monroe County to Declare Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis in the City of Rochester.***

Honorable Council Members:

We ask you to join us by signing your name on this Memorializing Resolution urging the Public Health Director of Monroe County and the Monroe County Legislature to Declare Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis in the County of Monroe and, in doing so, to collectively **State and Resolve:**

**WHEREAS**, We, the undersigned members of Rochester City Council, believe that gun violence is a critical issue that has plagued the City of Rochester for decades, and these acts of violence impact each and every one of the communities we serve – and therefore, we urge our local Public Health Department to take a necessary step towards eradicating gun violence by declaring it a Public Health Crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, earlier this year, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy issued a landmark Surgeon General’s Advisory on Firearm Violence, declaring firearm violence in America to be a Public Health Crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, a Surgeon General’s Advisory is a public statement that calls the American people’s attention to an urgent public health issue. Advisories are reserved for significant public health challenges that require the nation’s immediate awareness and action; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Surgeon General’s Advisory, Since 2020, firearm-related injury has been the leading cause of death for U.S. children and adolescents (ages 1–19), surpassing motor vehicle crashes, cancer, and drug overdose and poisoning; and

**WHEREAS**, the advisory further states that in 2022, 48,204 total people died from firearm-related injuries, including suicides, homicides, and unintentional deaths. This is over 8,000 more lives lost than in 2019 and over 16,000 more lives lost than in 2010; and

***RE: Declaring Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis***

**WHEREAS**, the advisory additionally notes that nearly 6 in 10 U.S. adults say that they worry “sometimes,” “almost every day,” or “every day,” about a loved one being a victim of firearm violence and that such high levels of exposure to firearm violence for both children and adults give rise to a cycle of trauma and fear within our communities, contributing to the nation’s mental health crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, This advisory is the first publication from the Office of the Surgeon General dedicated to this issue, and it outlines the devastating and far-reaching consequences that firearm violence poses to the health and well-being of the country; and

**WHEREAS**, Rochester is no exception to what is happening nationally, and, according to the Rochester Police Department’s Open Data Portal, there were 43 fatal shootings, 57 fatal shootings, 63 fatal shootings, and 44 fatal shootings in the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023, respectively; and

**WHEREAS**, that same source reports that there have been 17 fatal shootings and 82 total shooting incidents that comprise 104 total victims as of August 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, seven minors have been the victim of shootings so far in 2024, one of which was fatal; and

**WHEREAS**, firearm violence has a detrimental effect on our city’s communities as a result of increased healthcare, mental health and emergency services costs, criminal justice costs, and loss of income for workers who are victims of gun violence and are unable to continue working or are caregivers of such gun violence survivors; and

**WHEREAS**, a public health approach, data analysis and dashboards, service triage, and public health resources can contribute to addressing root causes related to gun violence; and

**WHEREAS**, community trauma and the historic concentration of gun violence in some neighborhoods has a detrimental impact on the quality of life of residents in Monroe County and the City of Rochester; and

**WHEREAS**, we see a great value in our local Public Health Director mirroring the efforts of the Surgeon General by issuing a similar advisory on the local level as part of declaring firearm violence in Rochester to be a local Public Health Crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of Monroe is the most appropriate level of government to make this declaration as the City of Rochester does not have a public health department.

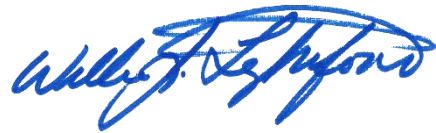
**RE: Declaring Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis**

**Now, Therefore, be it RESOLVED,** We, the undersigned Members of Rochester City Council, call on the Public Health Director of Monroe County and the County Legislature to Declare Gun Violence to be a Public Health Crisis in the County of Monroe, including the City of Rochester.

Sincerely,



**Miguel A. Meléndez, Jr., President**  
At-Large Representative



**Willie J. Lightfoot, Sr.**  
At-Large Representative