GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION & AWARENESS MONTH
JUNE 2026

WHEREAS, According to 2024 data from the Pew Research Center, 44,447 people died from firearm-related injuries in the United States - 62 percent of these were suicides and 38 percent of them were homicides, totaling approximately 15,364 deaths, and;

WHEREAS, this loss of life equates to approximately 122 firearm-related deaths every day in the United States. According to 2024 FBI data, 85.2 percent of homicides in the United States involved a firearm and this rate remains approximately 25 times higher than that of other high-income nations, and;

WHEREAS, firearms have been the leading cause of death for American children and teens (ages 1–19) since 2020 - exceeding motor vehicle crashes, cancer, and all other causes with no other peer nation having firearm deaths among the top causes of child mortality, and;

WHEREAS, in 2025, the Buncombe County Register of Deeds recorded 56 death certificates that showed someone died by a gun - 48 of those incidents occurred in Buncombe County with the youngest only 14 years old, while the oldest was 93 years old, and;

WHEREAS, Buncombe County is working to end deaths by guns – including suicides, accidents, and gun violence – with evidence-based solutions, and;

WHEREAS, support for the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding residents goes hand-in-hand with promoting gun ownership safety and keeping guns away from people with dangerous histories. Gun owners in North Carolina have a responsibility to safely store their firearms to help prevent accidents and theft, and;

WHEREAS, since 2021, Buncombe County's Justice Services Department has partnered with community-based organizations to develop community safety initiatives directed toward healing, support, practical resources, and a reduction in violence for our communities with the highest rates of gun violence, and continues to partner with these organizations to implement a Community-Based Public Health Response to Violence - offering training and support for Community Health Worker-Violence Prevention Professionals, youth leadership development, and convening a multi-sectoral coalition to prevent and respond to community violence, and;

WHEREAS, Buncombe County's Health and Human Services Department seeks to strengthen our community by advancing health, safety, and opportunity - including preventing injury and death - by promoting health and well-being through the use of data, research, policies and partnerships,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims **June 1 - 7, 2026** as **NC SAFE Week of Action** and **June** as **Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month** in Buncombe County. We urge residents to recognize survivors of gun violence, honor the lives lost to gun violence, commit to reducing gun violence, and encourage gun owners to commit to safely storing their guns using approved measures.

This 2nd day of June, 2026.

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners