

RESOLUTION #6, 2024

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, INDIANA, ON COMMUNITY SAFETY, FIREARM EDUCATION, AND THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS

WHEREAS, the Common Council (“Common Council”) of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana (“City”) recognizes the ongoing effect of gun violence in the United States, the state of Indiana, the County of Porter, and the City of Valparaiso;

WHEREAS, the Common Council is aware and troubled by local incidents of young children accessing unsecured, loaded firearms;

WHEREAS, the Common Council recognizes the rights guaranteed under the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution and to Hoosiers under Article 1, Sec. 20 of Indiana’s Constitution; and

WHEREAS, in America, firearms are the leading cause of death for young persons ages 1 to 19, and injure thousands more annually based on the most recent available data;

WHEREAS, in the state of Indiana, suicide is the second leading cause of death for Hoosiers ages 10 to 34 based on the most recent available data;

WHEREAS, an estimated 4.6 million children live in homes with unsecured, loaded firearms, and most unintentional firearm-related shootings among children occur in or around the home;

WHEREAS, more than 80% of child firearm suicides involved a gun obtained from the child’s own home or that of a friend or relative;

WHEREAS, approximately 76% of the firearms used in school shootings, perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18, are acquired from the shooter’s home or the home of friends or relatives; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that strong child access prevention initiatives and education decrease unintentional shootings, suicides, and school shootings; and

WHEREAS, direction from the Indiana State Police, the Indiana Department of Education, the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the National Rifle Association (NRA), and Everytown for Gun Safety strongly encourage storing firearms locked, unloaded, and separate from ammunition to reduce the risk of unsupervised access to firearms by children and teens and to prevent unintentional shootings and suicide in children and teens; and that

WHEREAS, the Common Council recognizes and commends the Valparaiso Police Department for offering free gun locks and safe storage materials, as well as the MAAC Foundation for their proactive approach to gun safety and education, and the Council encourages all residents and firearm owners to utilize these resources; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council also recognizes the importance of encouraging, promoting, and committing itself to common-sense preventive measures that keep the City and our children safe; and that

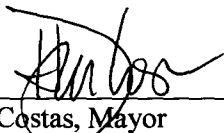
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Valparaiso urges its constituent organizations, including law enforcement and its community school system to raise awareness that secure gun storage, storing guns locked, unloaded and separate from ammunition, can prevent theft and access by children, unauthorized users, and anyone who may pose a danger to themselves or others, and that teaching gun safety and secure gun storage can save children's lives;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Valparaiso will work with these organizations to raise awareness about gun safety and safe firearm storage and encourage its constituent organizations to collaborate and recognize that secure storage is an adult responsibility and is essential to preventing unauthorized, unsupervised access to firearms by children;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Valparaiso urges its state and federal legislators to enact laws which incentivize firearm training and education, as well as the purchase and use of secure firearm storage devices to prevent access by children and teens, and which promote the safe operation and storage of firearms in coordination with programs and information as described above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Valparaiso commits itself to exploring all opportunities to better promote the safe and responsible ownership and storage of firearms through coordinated efforts such as offering free gun locks to residents, offering firearm training and educational classes at free or reduced costs to residents by partnering with organizations such as the MAAC Foundation, and by working with local governmental and law enforcement agencies to develop firearm training and safety initiatives similar to those throughout the state of Indiana and recently announced in Lake County, Indiana.

ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, by a 7 - 0 vote of all members present and voting on this 12 day of February, 2024.



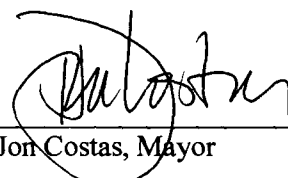
Jon Costas, Mayor

Presented by me to the Mayor of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, this 12 day of February, 2024 at the hour of 10 o'clock P.M.



Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

This resolution approved and signed by me this _____ day of _____, 2024.



Jon Costas, Mayor