

**A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY  
LEGISLATORS BASKIN AND JOHNSON**

**Re: Establishing an Erie County Gun Violence Alleviation Alliance**

**WHEREAS**, according to the American Public Health Association, gun violence is a leading cause of premature death in the United States, and guns kill more than 38,000 people and cause nearly 85,000 injuries each year; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, violence involving guns increased in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2021, gun violence and injuries and deaths due to guns have surged; for instance, in January and February 2021, 53 people were either wounded or killed in shootings in Buffalo, contrasted with 22 in 2020 and 16 in 2019, and in 2020, there were 65 homicides in Buffalo; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, 355 people were shot in Buffalo, compared with 188 in 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, through July 16, there have been 47 homicides in Buffalo so far in 2021, as contrasted with the record of 92 homicides in 1994; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the victims of this 2021 senseless gun violence is 3-year-old Shaquelle Walker Jr. who was shot on July 5, 2021 while watching fireworks; and

**WHEREAS**, this grim milestone and gun violence record cannot be allowed to be broken in 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, as has been the case in other municipalities across the country that are experiencing major levels of gun violence, it is time that gun violence in Erie County be declared as a public health emergency to allow advocacy groups and civic leaders to work with municipal officials, police departments and other stakeholders to address this scourge and to help save lives through a trauma-informed care approach.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED**, that the Erie County Legislature calls for the creation of an Erie County Gun Violence Alleviation Alliance that brings together police, prosecutors, advocacy groups, civic leaders, and elected officials across jurisdictions to work together to stem gun violence in our county; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, this alliance should include a robust Erie County government presence and involvement, including representatives from the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, and Departments of Central Police Services, Probation and Social Services, to help other municipal agencies and stakeholders; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, the new alliance should be impaneled to develop an anti-gun violence action plan and strategy for working across municipal boundaries to address this problem in our community; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, the new alliance should aggressively work to solicit grant funding and to seek access to federal American Rescue Plan funding, including from the County and from local governments in Erie County to help perform their mission; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this alliance is encouraged to engage certified community agencies with training expertise in conflict resolution, trauma informed care, and peer mediation in collaborative partnerships with community agencies skilled in outreach with Erie County zip codes wherein gun violence is most prevalent to develop measures to decrease gun violence; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the County Executive, Sheriff, District Attorney, Commissioners of Central Police Services, Probation and Social Services, the Erie County Association of Governments, to the mayors and supervisors of the cities, towns and villages in Erie County, and to the Erie County Chiefs of Police Association.

**Fiscal Impact:** None.