

RESOLUTION DECLARING THE CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA  
A SECOND AMENDMENT SANCTUARY CITY



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# SECOND AMENDMENT SANCTUARY CITY RESOLUTION

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The Resolution



DECEMBER 3, 2019

MARK A. CARUSO  
Vice Mayor

**WHEREAS**, the Norton City Council is extremely concerned about the passage of any new legislation that would further restrict or prohibit the rights of citizens of the Commonwealth in terms of laws that may include, but are not limited to, the type of firearms they may own, requiring background checks for private transfers, the age at which firearms may be purchased and used, the number of handguns a citizen can purchase each month, the capacity of magazines for semi-automatic firearms, and prohibition of associating and training with fellow citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council is concerned that any further erosion of our citizens Second Amendment Rights would begin a slippery slope of restrictions and confiscation designed to eliminate the centuries old rights of our citizens in the name of public safety and security, while in fact, reducing both the safety and security of our citizens and providing no real restrictions or preventative impact on the criminal element's ability to acquire or use the prohibited firearms; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council wishes to express its intent to stand as a Sanctuary City for Second Amendment rights and to oppose, within the limits of the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, any efforts to restrict such rights, and to use such legal means at its disposal to protect the right of citizens to keep and bear arms, including through legal action, the power of appropriation of public funds, and the right to petition for redress of grievances; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Virginia must not seek to become 'California East' in terms of new firearms legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution reads: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."; and

**WHEREAS**, the Militia consists of the law-abiding citizens of the state, and is not the same as the National Guard; and

**WHEREAS**, local militias have a right to associate with like-minded citizens and train to the use of arms; and

**WHEREAS**, Article 1, Section 13 of the Constitution of Virginia states in part "That a well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to

arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defense of a free state, therefore, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed..., and

**WHEREAS**, the Second Amendment is the only individual right our founders placed in the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution that was designed to guarantee the other Nine Amendments, providing for self-defense, national defense, and defense against tyranny within our own borders; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council agrees with Mr. Fredrick Douglass, champion of civil rights before and after the Civil War, who stated that “A man’s rights rest in three boxes: the ballot box, the jury box, and the cartridge box.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council believes the words spoken centuries ago, attributed to Aristotle, hold true today; that “Both oligarch and tyrant mistrust the people, and therefore deprive them of their arms”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council agrees with the late Colonel (R) Jeff Cooper, when he correctly stated that “The rifle itself has no moral stature, since it has no will of its own. Naturally, it may be used by evil men for evil purposes, but there are more good men than evil, and while the latter cannot be persuaded to the path of righteousness by propaganda, they can certainly be corrected by good men with rifles.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council agrees with the late President Ronald Reagan when he stated that “It's a nasty truth, but those who seek to inflict harm are not fazed by gun controllers. I happen to know this from personal experience...You won't get gun control by disarming law-abiding citizens. There's only one way to get real gun control: Disarm the thugs and the criminals, lock them up, and if you don't actually throw away the key, at least lose it for a long time.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council believes that author Jeff Snyder spoke truth when he stated that “But to ban guns because criminals use them is to tell the innocent and law-abiding that their rights and liberties depend not on their own conduct, but on the conduct of the guilty and the lawless, and that the law will permit them to have only such rights and liberties as the lawless will allow.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council believes that if semi-automatic firearms and high capacity magazines are barred from purchase and use by our citizens then only the criminal element in our society will possess them, placing the law-abiding citizen

at a great disadvantage and at great risk to their safety and security. Further, the restriction of such “common use” implements of self-defense by leaders at the state level is an affront and slander to the character of honest, responsible and law-abiding citizens who are by far the overwhelming majority of people owning such implements; and

**WHEREAS**, responsible, law-abiding citizens, should never be punished or restricted from firearms possession and use due to the criminal acts of others, no matter how horrendous the criminal act or evil the perpetrator; and

**WHEREAS**, the congressionally-mandated study of the federal “assault weapon ban” of 1994-2004 found that the ban had no impact on crime. Subsequent research conducted by the RAND Corporation found no conclusive evidence that banning so called “assault weapons” or “large” capacity magazines has an effect on mass shootings or violent crime; and

**WHEREAS**, Americans own over eleven million AR-15s and buy hundreds of thousands of new ones every year; and

**WHEREAS**, AR-15s are the most commonly used rifles in marksmanship competitions, training, and home defense; and

**WHEREAS**, total violent crime and murder has fallen to near historic lows, while ownership of the firearms and magazines that gun control supporters want banned has risen to all-time highs; and

**WHEREAS**, Americans lawfully use firearms, to include the AR-15, hundreds of thousands of times each year, protecting themselves and their loved ones, in hunting and in marksmanship competitions, without incident; and

**WHEREAS**, abridging the rights of law-abiding gun owners does not reduce the criminal use of firearms by violent predators; and

**WHEREAS**, lawfully armed citizens have stopped active shooters and saved the lives of civilians and law enforcement officers; and

**WHEREAS**, current firearm and ammunition regulations are, when properly enforced and prosecuted, sufficient to dissuade all but the most evil and irreconcilable criminal; and

**WHEREAS**, AR-15s and other semi-automatic rifles are not the fully-automatic, military-grade firearms as often claimed by ignorant or deceitful anti-gun politicians, gun control supporters and the media; and

**WHEREAS**, ammunition magazines that hold more than 10 rounds are standard equipment for many “common use” handguns and rifles that Americans keep for self-defense; and

**WHEREAS**, gun control supporters are deceiving the citizens of the Commonwealth when claiming that so called “assault weapons” are used in most mass shootings. While the media focus on this false narrative, mass killings have been committed with firearms of all types, and without firearms of any type; and

**WHEREAS**, firearms that gun control supporters call “assault weapons” and ammunition magazines that they call “large” are among the arms protected by the Second Amendment; and

**WHEREAS**, because firearms with large capacity magazines are among the arms that are most useful for the entire range of defensive purposes, they’re “in common use” for defensive purposes, a standard articulated by the Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008); and

**WHEREAS**, Justice Antonin Scalia reiterated that the Second Amendment and *Heller* preclude “assault weapons” bans when he signed onto a dissent from the denial of certiorari in *Friedman v. Highland Park*; and

**WHEREAS**, the congressionally-mandated study of the federal “assault weapon” and “large” magazine “ban” concluded that “the banned guns were never used in more than a modest fraction of all gun murders” before the ban, and the ban’s 10-round limit on new magazines wasn’t a factor in multiple-victim or multiple-wound crimes; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, the RAND Corporation released a study that surveyed the available research on the effects of bans on “assault weapons” and “large” capacity magazines. The study found no conclusive evidence that such bans have an effect on mass shootings or violent crime; and

**WHEREAS**, Semi-automatics account for 20-25 percent of the approximately 400 million privately-owned firearms in the United States today and the percentage is rising, because semi-automatics account for over half of the 10-15 million new firearms bought annually; and

**WHEREAS**, semi-automatic rifles like the AR-15 are the most popular rifles in the United States for home protection and defensive skills-based firearm training and marksmanship competitions, and they're increasingly popular among hunters; and

**WHEREAS**, responsible, law-abiding citizens, upon reaching the age of 18, may serve their country in the Armed Forces of the United States, putting their life on the line for the citizens of our country, may vote and make legal decisions for themselves; therefore, should not be restricted from the use of firearms beyond the current extent of the law; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Justice research reveals that criminals fear armed potential victims more than law enforcement officers; and

**WHEREAS**, if the currently proposed gun control legislation goes into effect in its current form, hundreds of thousands of otherwise good, responsible, law-abiding citizens of the Commonwealth may become class 6 felons, and subsequently may not be able to legally own firearms at all, and may be prohibited from voting in any future elections; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council is committed to the letter and intent of the founder's words as they were presented in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of Virginia and truly care about the safety and security of its citizens; so

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council declares the City of Norton a Second Amendment Sanctuary City.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council will not authorize or appropriate any public funds, resources, equipment, buildings or offices for the purposes of enforcing or assisting in the enforcement of any element of such unconstitutional acts, laws, orders, mandates, rules or regulations that further infringe on the right of the people to keep and bear arms as described above; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council does not support any additional restrictions or laws concerning the sale and use of firearms, that will be dangerous to the safety and security of our citizens and create a new and unique class of gun control felons; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council supports our brave law enforcement officers in their efforts to hold violent criminals accountable for their actions, rather than support the irrational, unconstitutional and/or disproven attempts to make a community safer by restricting law-abiding citizens right to own and use “commonly used” firearms to protect themselves, their families and their community; and

**BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY** that the Norton City Council supports the efforts of other communities in their desire to become a Second Amendment Sanctuary.

The undersigned Clerk of Council certifies that the Resolution set forth was adopted during an open meeting on 3 December 2019 by the City Council.

**CITY OF NORTON, VIRGINIA**

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**Joseph Fawbush, Mayor**

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**Mark A. Caruso, Vice Mayor**

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**William J. Mays, Councilman**

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**Delores ‘Dee’ Belcher - Councilwoman**

**ATTEST:**

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**Clerk of Council**

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**Robert Fultz – Councilman**