

Dear friends and family,

As you may have heard, the Newton City Council is currently debating potential ordinances to restrict and/or ban firearm stores from Newton. This came about after a group of citizens--which became "Stop Gun Stores in Newton"-- learned that a firearm dealer was ready to set up shop a few doors down from Cabot's ice cream.

While Newton is overwhelmingly in opposition to a gun store in our midst, rather than enact smart and restrictive zoning to restrict and discourage gun stores, as many other communities have successfully done, several City Councilors are adamant about pursuing a ban of all firearm stores from Newton. No national gun violence prevention groups support this effort at this time because the federal judiciary is so pro-gun that such an action is likely to be struck down and **erode** gun protection laws across the country. Essentially, in trying to do the morally right thing, we could **significantly harm** our own and other communities and seriously set back the national gun violence prevention effort.

We can accomplish what we want and protect the safety and well-being of Newton without unnecessarily baiting the gun lobby. Zoning can and will accomplish the goal of protecting Newton. Piscataway, NJ is a perfect example. They also enacted restrictive zoning with 1000 foot buffer zones around schools, parks, and religious institutions; they have not faced a legal challenge to date, nor have they had a firearms shop open in their city.

I urge you to email your City Council at citycouncil@newtonma.gov. Below is an email my fellow organizers sent to the City Council, which you are free to use. I am also attaching an FAQs about this issue should you wish to learn more about why we do not support a ban at this time.

Most urgently, to stop the firearms shop from being able to operate a few doors down from Cabot's, the City Council **MUST** vote in favor of the zoning ordinance on June 7. Please write to the City Council and ask that they vote in favor of this ordinance on June 7.

Thank you!

Dear City Councilors,

We are writing to urge you to please vote down the proposed gun store ban and vote instead for the proposed zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance you have proposed related to gun stores is already an effective tool to stop 709 Washington Street and prevent future gun stores. As demonstrated by the nearly 10,000 petition signatures, hundreds of letters, and the general unease of the last few

weeks, the residents of Newton have made clear they do not want a gun store anywhere in our city. In the unlikely event a store tries to open anytime in the future, this group will activate, make giant waves, and provide a tsunami of opposition to any store in our city. The current zoning ordinance gives the city council ample tools to act on the will of the people.

This proposed ban tempts the gun lobby at a time when we have extremely unfriendly Supreme Court that is poised to take this type of case in an effort to expand gun rights:

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/20/politics/clarence-thomas-abortion-guns/index.html> They now have the votes to do so. Even if a ban case does not make it to the Supreme Court, a protracted legal battle will cost our city dearly. Do we really want to practically beg for legal action that has little likelihood of success and has the potential to protect gun rights nationally?

A ban does nothing more than the zoning proposal to keep Newton safer. As long as we are surrounded by other communities and states with ample guns, we are at risk of gun violence. In fact, **a ban has the potential to set back progress by diverting attention away from the important, strategic work being done by knowledgeable and effective state and national gun violence prevention advocacy groups.**

Pushing forward an ill-advised policy as a knee-jerk reaction to something happening in our city is careless and irresponsible. **Please put a stop to this recklessness by voting AGAINST the proposed ban and voting FOR the proposed zoning ordinance.** It is the right thing to do for Newton, and frankly, the country.

Thank you