



April 26, 2021

Mayor Fuller and the Members of the Newton City Council
Newton, MA

Sent via email

Dear Mayor Fuller and the Members of the City Council,

On behalf of Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, the gun violence prevention organization led by former Congresswoman and survivor, Gabby Giffords, I write to offer our perspective on an ordinance that would prohibit gun dealers from operating in the City of Newton. For nearly 30 years, the organization now known as Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence has been providing advice and assistance to federal, state, and local legislators and attorneys on gun violence prevention.

We are aware that Newton is contemplating an ordinance that would prohibit gun dealers from operating in the city and that such an ordinance has garnered significant public support. Given our decades of expertise in gun violence prevention policy and Second Amendment litigation, we write to offer the following perspective.

Regardless of the constitutionality of a law banning gun dealers, gun advocates will surely sue the city for such an ordinance. In light of the fact that former President Trump filled the federal judiciary, including the Supreme Court, with gun extremists, even a law fully consistent with existing constitutional precedent could face a serious threat. A bad ruling in this case could jeopardize reasonable, constitutional, and effective laws that regulate dealers around the country. Zoning and other regulatory measures, on the other hand, are effective tools which other cities have successfully employed. Pursuing a ban at this time with the current makeup of the federal judiciary is not an effort that Giffords recommends.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at aanderman@giffords.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison Anderman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Allison Anderman
Senior Counsel