



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. _____

RESOLUTION

R18 - 2019

Introduced by the City Council on March 6, 2019

Recommends State pass legislation that would allow local jurisdictions to prohibit fire arms at Public Meetings and Municipal Buildings, decreasing the chances of municipal workers and elected officials being shot and killed while performing their jobs.

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

WHEREAS, State law prevents local municipalities from enacting common-sense laws protecting residents- and ourselves - by regulating firearms – to wit under Pennsylvania’s firearm laws: “a municipality shall not enact any ordinance or take any other action dealing with the regulation of the transfer, ownership, transportation or possession of firearms”; and

WHEREAS, on Nov. 27, 2018 Paradise Township sewage enforcement officer Michael Tripus was sitting at his desk, starting his workday and according to police, as reported in The Morning Call, David Green entered the township building and asked to talk to Tripus. A colleague indicated where Tripus’ desk was. Green walked over, began a conversation, then pulled out his handgun, police said, and shot Tripus; and

WHEREAS in August 2013, Rockne Newell stormed into a public meeting in Monroe County, Pennsylvania, and opened fire, killing three people and injuring several more. If not for the courage of Bernie Kozen, who tackled and disarmed Newell, many more innocent individuals may have lost their lives. As Newell was arrested, he told the arresting officers that "I wish I had killed more of them."

WHEREAS, a 40-year-old man entered the lobby of Allentown police headquarters and tried to enter the locked interior doors. The man then asked Officer Eric Sbat if he could step outside, and Sbat told the man he could only speak through a glass partition. Court records show the man pulled a gun from his sweatshirt and pointed it at Sbat, who was just a few inches away; and

WHEREAS, municipal employees deal with many angry residents over tax bills, zoning regulations, code enforcement, etc.; and

WHEREAS, public meetings are a place where tempers flare and residents parading around with firearms not only is unacceptable to us but can intimidate others and prevent open dialogue; and

WHEREAS, Representative Carolyn Comitta has put out a co-sponsorship memo last session for a bill allowing the prohibition of guns at public meetings and plans to introduce a bill this session; and

WHEREAS, Allentown City Council believes a majority of citizens are downright astonished and appalled that persons can walk into public meetings with firearms, let alone go about parading in municipal offices.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council advocating for the safety of municipal employees and the safety of city residents asks that local representatives co-sponsor the bill and allow municipalities to regulate firearms in and on government property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION BE SENT to Representatives Schweyer, Schlossberg and State Senator Browne.