

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

City Council Memorandum

SUBJECT: Resolution in support of House Bill 988 related to the fireworks nuisance
TO: Members of Council
FROM: Grace Crampsie Smith, Member of Council
DATE: March 31, 2021

In 2017, the Pennsylvania General Assembly enacted the Fireworks Law, Act 43 of 2017, which permitted Pennsylvania residents to purchase much larger and louder fireworks than previously available. Since passage of the 2017 Fireworks Law, complaints of inappropriate fireworks usage have dramatically increased in the City of Bethlehem and across the Commonwealth.

Inappropriate use of fireworks is seriously and negatively affecting the quality of life in our City and in the larger community. A large percentage of our residents are adversely affected by fireworks including veterans, victims of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, children with sensory issues, infants, toddlers, children of all ages, the elderly, people sleeping, and our beloved pets.

In response to the growing fireworks nuisance, members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, including some of our local state legislators, have introduced House Bill 988 ("HB 988"). The proposed law would repeal the changes made to the state's fireworks laws in 2017 that allowed Pennsylvania residents to purchase larger and louder fireworks.

I respectfully ask the Members of Council to consider the attached resolution at the April 6, 2021 City Council meeting. It supports passage of HB 988 and comparable legislation in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.



Grace Crampsie Smith, Member Council

CC: R. Donchez, Mayor

**RESOLUTION NO. 2021-
Resolution in support of Pennsylvania House Bill HB988
to amend the Fireworks Law, Act 43 of 2017**

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Pennsylvania General Assembly enacted the Fireworks Law, Act 43 of 2017 (“Fireworks Law”) which permitted Pennsylvania residents to purchase “Consumer Fireworks” and expanded the scope of fireworks available to residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to include significantly larger and louder fireworks than previously available;

WHEREAS, since the passage of Fireworks Law, which authorized the sale of Consumer Fireworks to Pennsylvania residents, complaints of inappropriate fireworks usage have dramatically increased across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including in the City of Bethlehem;

WHEREAS, the frequent and continual use of fireworks is adversely affecting the overall well-being and safety of our community as a whole. A large percentage of our community is significantly adversely affected by fireworks including veterans, victims of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, children with sensory issues, infants, toddlers, and children of all ages, the elderly, residents having their sleep disrupted, and our beloved pets;

WHEREAS, in response to the nuisance of Consumer Fireworks across the Commonwealth, House Bill HB988 (“HB988”) has been introduced by members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives which would repeal the most recent changes made to the state’s fireworks laws and reinstate the provisions as they existed prior to the passage of the 2017 Fireworks Law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bethlehem believes that the inappropriate use of Consumer Fireworks has become a significant nuisance that is disturbing the peace and negatively impacting quality of life in our City.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Bethlehem urges its state legislators to work in the Pennsylvania General Assembly to pass HB988 in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and comparable legislation in the Pennsylvania Senate.

Sponsored by _____

ADOPTED by Council this day of , 2021.

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk