



City of Highland Park

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Media Release

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Community Vigil Remarks by Mayor Nancy R. Roterling

Highland Park, Illinois – With a heavy heart, we welcome you here tonight. While I am so proud of our community for coming together, I wish it were not because of a tragic act of gun violence.

The July 4th mass shooting was the bloodiest day we have ever experienced in Highland Park, caused by a hateful and cowardly individual who opened fire with an assault weapon, during our annual July 4 hometown tradition. Seven individuals were senselessly murdered, dozens more were injured, and countless numbers of our children and community members have been traumatized. Tonight, we mourn for those who were murdered, we mourn for their families, we mourn for their friends, we mourn for their neighbors, and we mourn for our community.

We say the names of those who were taken from us as we remember them. They were brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, grandparents, cousins, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and so much more.

Katherine Goldstein of Highland Park
Irina McCarthy of Highland Park
Kevin McCarthy of Highland Park
Jacquelyn Sundheim of Highland Park
Stephen Straus of Highland Park
Nicolas Toledo-Zaragoza of Morelos, Mexico
Eduardo Uvaldo of Waukegan

The trauma of gun violence doesn't end when the shooting stops. Experiencing gun violence in our community has a lasting impact on us - we are the survivors. Each of us will have a different experience and a different timeline as we find a way to move forward into our new normal. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to honor those taken and those injured with action - whatever that might mean to you and yours.

As we face the ugly truth of what happened here, we are reminded of the fragility and vulnerability of life. It forces us to put things in perspective, challenges us to expand our understanding of how things work, and connects us with one another in profound ways.

We will keep those murdered in our hearts and in our minds as we work to resolve that this evil attack will not define who we are, nor will it define how we treat each other. We will recognize our common humanity as we live our lives. We acknowledge that the intensity of our grief and suffering represents the depth of our love we hold for our neighbors and our hometown. We will listen to each other's story and understand that in each and every story there is love, loss, and a need for hope. We will care for each other and provide strength when it is needed most. And with time, this will carry us through. This is who we are - we are Highland Park and we are strong together.

We will now light candles to honor this time of mourning as we grieve the loss of those who were taken by senseless gun violence and those who were injured and struggling to recover. We promise to hold them in our hearts and to honor their legacies.

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