



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

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A resolution requesting that the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp study the feasibility of deploying alternatives to fireworks and pyrotechnics during special events to better safeguard environmental protections, animal welfare, and public safety.

WHEREAS, each year the City of Nashville hosts large events in recognition of holidays and other celebrations that draw hundreds of thousands of people to attend in person; and

WHEREAS, continued celebration of these events is appropriate and an important tradition to preserve; and

WHEREAS, large events like the July 4th and New Year's Eve celebrations generate significant local tax revenue from visitors, result in positive national media coverage that showcase Nashville as a fun and welcoming destination to visit, and include charitable components that directly benefit various local nonprofit organizations; and

WHEREAS, in the past, celebrations for July 4th and New Year's Eve have included significant fireworks and pyrotechnics displays; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration confirmed that July 4th fireworks displays bring a 42% increase in the level of fine particulate matter across the U.S., the equivalent of impacts felt by some wildfire events, increasing particulate matter pollution as much as 370 percent; and

WHEREAS, an increase of fine particulate matter of this magnitude exceeds day-to-day outdoor air quality measures by the Environmental Protection Agency and can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat, cause shortness of breath, and exacerbate respiratory issues for certain individuals, such as those with asthma, chronic bronchitis, and COPD; and

WHEREAS, fireworks displays can also cause harm and discomfort for individuals who suffer from PTSD, and for individuals who are sensitive to loud noises; and

WHEREAS, dogs and other household pets are particularly vulnerable to fireworks disturbances. Humane societies and animal shelters report increased incidents of lost or runaway pets after July 4th fireworks festivities; and migratory birds are especially sensitive. A 2022 study revealed the long-term impact of fireworks on wild birds, including disruptions to migratory patterns and the abandonment of sleep sites at crucial rest areas; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, there were an estimated 10,200 fireworks-related injuries and 11 reported deaths, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; and

WHEREAS, cities across the United States, including Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, Boulder, Flagstaff, Aspen, and others are exploring alternatives that are less environmentally impactful, less disruptive to animals and wildlife, less dangerous, and often cheaper, including synchronized drone displays and lasers; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that alternatives to fireworks and pyrotechnics be studied to potentially offset harmful impacts to the environment and to animal welfare and to better protect residents of Nashville and Davidson County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metro Council hereby requests that the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corps evaluate the costs and benefits of deploying alternatives to pyrotechnics and fireworks, such as synchronized drone displays or laser shows, during celebrations of holidays and other special events hosted in Nashville.

Section 2. The Metro Council further requests the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corps share results from this evaluation with the Metro Council by December 31, 2023.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its passage, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.