



James R. Fouts - Mayor

June 27, 2019

Representative John Chirkun
22nd House District
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ONE CITY SQUARE, SUITE 215
WARREN, MI 48093-6726
(586) 574-4520
www.cityofwarren.org

Dear Representative Chirkun:

My immediate reaction as Warren mayor to your law (House Bill 5450) is that this is **another sellout to fireworks lobbyists**, one of which admitted to me that he helped write the original fireworks bill that opened the door to louder, longer and more lethal fireworks in our state.

I want to remind you that in 2012, when the original fireworks law took effect (again, the law was written by a fireworks lobbyist), I opposed it and I have advocated changes in the law that lessen the noise impact on our neighborhoods.

When fireworks are discharged, I receive many calls about the impact of loud fireworks from Veterans, residents who suffer from various anxiety issues, people with small children, many upset residents who have to get up and go to work early in the morning, residents concerned for their pets, and senior citizens, about the disruption that affects their peace and tranquility. **Indeed, other residents are upset with the feeling they are trapped in a war zone.** I still believe this law should be rescinded because of the disruption, blight, and noise caused by the law.

In Warren, we have put strong restrictions on fireworks.

Every year, during this time period I ride in a police vehicle with a police officer to enforce these restrictions and before July 4, I visit fireworks vendors in our city to be certain they are not selling illegal fireworks or selling to individuals under 18. I also hand them a 1-page copy of Warren's stringent rules and emphasize to them that they must inform their customers of those rules and if possible give them a copy of the rules.

I was pleased to see part of your bill gave cities like Warren the right to regulate temporary fireworks stands.

But the new law fails to address the critical issue of loud and dangerous fireworks, such as bottle rockets.

This year, your legislation allows fireworks for six days and in 2020 because July 4 falls on a Saturday, seven days. This is unacceptable.

As far as the argument that loud fireworks sales bring in more state revenues, what about the overtime costs of police and fire who check neighborhoods for up to seven days? **The state should reimburse communities for these costs.**

If you are serious about making changes in the fireworks law, take on the fireworks lobbyists and sponsor bills that put real teeth in the fireworks laws that make fireworks less of a serious problem in our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Fouts". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

James R. Fouts
Mayor of Warren

p.s. I am disappointed that again controversial legislation like this gets passed in the midnight legislative session. There should be closer control and restriction on legislation like this getting passed quickly without closer scrutiny by representative from the city and the public as a whole. The so-called improvement of changing the law from midnight to 11:45 p.m. is insignificant compared to the significant impact it will have on the peace and tranquility of our neighborhoods. **However, I appreciate your effort at trying to get control over this out-of-control event that occurs every year at this time.**

Finally, I have no problem with citizens using fireworks on the 4th of July or even the day before, **but not beyond that.**