



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWTON

PO Box 610207 Newton, MA 02461 www.lwvnewton.org

617-383-4598 Email: info@lwvnewton.org

January 8, 2018

Dear Mayor Fuller and members of the City Council:

Board of Directors

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Susan Flicop

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The Board of the League of Women Voters of Newton urges the new Mayor and the City Council to embrace and prioritize the ordinance requiring property owners, residents, and businesses, to clear their sidewalks of snow and ice in compliance with the ordinance.

We recommend the addition of a clause to provide this ordinance with meaningful incentives for compliance by implementing fines. Since this ordinance has been in place, more sidewalks have been cleared and mobility throughout the City has been enhanced. However, we continue to see residential and business sidewalks blocked by snow or ice. Research in behavioral economics consistently finds experience with a fine significantly boosts future compliance. We believe that with education, a fine, and consistent enforcement, Newton will be able to maintain safe passage on sidewalks.

Strengthening this ordinance supports our City's Energy Reduction Goals. Transportation accounts for at least 40% of Newton's greenhouse gas emissions. Reliably safe sidewalks increase use of mass transit and pedestrian activity, reducing our reliance on automobiles for local transportation and our greenhouse gas production.

In addition, our sidewalks across the city are used by people walking dogs, delivering mail and packages, walking children to school, visiting neighbors, etc.

We request you to make the ordinance permanent and to designate responsibility for enforcement, as quickly as possible, to protect our pedestrians and our environment.

Sincerely,

Susan Flicop
President, LWVN