



Proclamation

Start by Believing Day

April 1st 2026

City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Proclamation

Whereas: the City of Somerville shares a critical concern for victims of sexual violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

Whereas: in 2025 the Somerville Police Department received a total of 34 reports of Sexual Assault, and the Victim Advocate served the needs of victims during crisis intervention, law enforcement interviews, or other proceedings; and

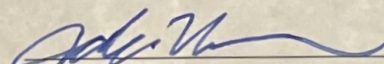
Whereas: current estimates suggest as few as 1 in 5 sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement and less than 3 percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the perpetrator; and

Whereas: research documents that victims are far more likely to disclose their sexual assault to a friend or family member, and when these loved ones respond with doubt, shame, or blame, victims suffer additional negative effects on their physical and psychological well-being; and

Whereas: the Start by Believing public awareness campaign (a program of End Violence Against Women International) is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help victims to access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jake Wilson, Mayor of the City of Somerville, do hereby proclaim the City's support of the Start by Believing public awareness campaign, and do hereby declare the first Wednesday of April each year to be **Start by Believing Day** in Somerville.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this
1st day of April 2026



Jake Wilson
MAYOR

