



TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: February 20, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 646 – *Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 646.

Senate Bill 646 strengthens Maryland’s current requirements for firearm storage. The bill increases the age of a “child” from 16 to 18 for purposes of application of the storage requirements; requires that guns are locked by an external safety lock, an integrated mechanical safety device or in a safe storage depository (lock box); and strengthens current penalties to include potential imprisonment not to exceed two years.

It has been well documented that the presence of unlocked guns in the home increases the risk of both accidental and intentional gun injuries. In fact, the vast majority of the guns used in youth suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were guns that were in the residence of the victim, a relative, or a friend. Strengthening Maryland’s firearm storage requirements will keep dangerous firearms out of the hands of children and will reduce community and school shootings, unintentional shootings, and youth suicide. Passage of the storage requirements included in Senate Bill 646 are long overdue. MDAAP urges a favorable report.

For more information call:

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