



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support of SB 646 –Public Safety–Access to Firearms –Storage

TO: Chairman Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Janice Bird, MD, Gun Violence Task Force, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.

DATE: February 20, 2020

We, as Unitarian Universalists, believe that we all belong to an interconnected community responsible for the safety and well-being of all. Wendi Winters was one of our faith, and a beloved, vibrant member of our Annapolis congregation. She was a victim of gun violence at the Capital Gazette shooting in June 2018.

I also speak as a physician who believes that gun violence is a public health problem.

Gun Violence affects all of us and we know that common sense gun laws save lives!

Some of you were Maryland legislators when the Firearms Act of 2013 was signed into law. These measures have been demonstrated to be effective in decreasing gun violence without compromising the rights of law-abiding citizens.

This Safe Storage and Child Access Prevention bill would strengthen current Maryland law by decreasing access to guns by children under the age of 18. We know that unlocked guns in the home will increase the risk of accidental and intentional gun injuries and suicide. Studies have shown that preventing children's access to guns will decrease suicides by guns and save lives.

The measure before you today is another tool to protect all of us from gun violence. We ask our legislators to stand on the side of love and justice and vote for this bill and others that will strengthen Maryland's gun violence prevention laws.

We urge a favorable report.

Janice Bird, MD

Gun Violence Task Force

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