

# Anne Arundel County\_FAV\_SB646

Uploaded by: Baron, Peter

Position: FAV

February 20, 2020

**Senate Bill 646**

**Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 646 - Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements. This Bill modifies and expands the prohibition on a storing or leaving a loaded or unloaded firearm in a location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised minor could gain access to the firearm and alters the misdemeanor penalty for a violation of the prohibition.

Firearms are the 3rd leading cause of death for youth under 18. Of the 1,814 firearm related deaths nationwide in 2017, 40% were suicides and 51% homicides (the rest were deemed unintentional, undetermined, or resulting from legal intervention). Studies of adolescent and adult suicides have generally found that those who died by firearm suicide lived in homes where guns were less securely stored.

The State Office of the Medical Examiner reported 209 deaths in Anne Arundel County from guns between the years 2013 to 2017. Of those deaths, 67 percent were ruled suicides, 30 percent were homicides, and 2 percent were accidental. The presence of unlocked guns in the home increases the risk of both accidental and intentional gun injuries. With respect to youth suicides, approximately 80% of the time the owner of the firearm was either a parent or another relative.

To begin our work to decrease these incidents of gun violence in our communities, Anne Arundel County formed a Gun Violence Prevention Task Force to research potential solutions. The task force released a preliminary report in December 2019 with a range of recommendations under four pillars. House Bill 636 falls under two of those pillars, “Intervene Before Gun Violence Occurs” and “Support Gun Safety Measures at Every Level of Government.” One of the recommendations was to support legislation that limits access to firearms by minors. The presence of unlocked guns in the home increases the risk of both accidental and intentional gun injuries and a May 2019 study determined that improvement in firearm storage practices could reduce youth firearm deaths between 6 and 32 percent. This legislation takes an important step in strengthening firearms storage laws in order to decrease minors’ access to firearms.

Accordingly, Anne Arundel County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 646.

# **MPGVLesleyBigdon\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: bigden, lesley

Position: FAV



## Volunteer Testimony

### SB 646- SUPPORT

#### Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage

#### Requirements

Lesley Bigden

#### Senate Judicial Proceeding Committee

February 20, 2020

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

On September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 I was across the street when the first plane hit the North Tower. I thought that was going to be the worst day of my life for the rest of my life but it isn't December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012 is when a family member of mine was taken at Sandy Hook.

For the past seven years I have been reluctant to speak about it as I feel it is my step sister's story and deeply respect her efforts in social and emotional education. However, this December Day impacts me every day as I now have a first grader and find myself in constant fear. I drop her off every morning at her school being sure that the last thing she hears me say is 'I love you'. And as she walks into school I wonder if that is the last time I will see her smile or hear her sweet voice.

No one should go through what my step sister has gone through. My father the only grandfather Jesse ever knew mourns every day. Our family will never be the same. The town of Newtown where they still reside will never be the same.

And we need to do everything in our power to prevent from this ever happening to a town in Maryland. This is your job to ensure our schools and communities are safer and the only way that happens is with stronger gun laws. Because strong words of sympathy after an incident like this is not good enough. You need to do everything in your power to make sure people with social emotional problems don't get access to firearms and cause devastation that people will NEVER recover from.

I struggle with being here as I prefer to be behind the scenes. That is what my profession has been for the past 23 years. Setting up events ensuring from behind the curtains that they are executed perfectly. But on the topic of Gun Violence I can no longer be silent. Not when gun violence is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death in children. Not when 2,700 children are dying each year. Not when there are 4.6 million children in this country living with an unsecured loaded firearm.

People in this country no longer have the ability to be complacent on this topic because it is taking away our 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights. When we are afraid to go to the movies, when we are afraid to worship in our churches, when I am afraid to send my 1<sup>st</sup> grader to school. It is your job as our representatives to make us safer. I encourage you to pass HB 636 to ensure that our children are safer as they don't make the decision to have a firearm in the house and there needs to be accountability.

**MPGVJanBird\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: bird, janice

Position: FAV



## 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

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

# **BaltimoreCounty\_FAV\_SB0646**

Uploaded by: Byrne, Julia

Position: FAV





JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

CHARLES R. CONNER III, ESQ.  
*Chief Legislative Officer*

KIMBERLY S. ROUTSON  
*Deputy Legislative Officer*

JOEL N. BELLER  
*Assistant Legislative Officer*

**BILL NO.:** SB 646

**TITLE:** Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements

**SPONSOR:** Senator Smith

**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

**DATE:** February 20, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 646 – Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements. This proposed legislation seeks to address an existing loophole in firearm laws. If enacted, it would prohibit the storage of a loaded or unloaded firearm in a location where a minor could gain access to the firearm.

Household guns contribute overwhelmingly to youth suicides and unintentional shootings among children. The risk increases further when guns are left where a child can access them. Estimates suggest that safe firearm storage could prevent almost a third of youth gun deaths.

The current laws in place to protect minors do not address a number of scenarios that could potentially turn dangerous. SB 646 offers a common sense solution to this problem, ensuring that firearms are being stored where they cannot be accessed by minors. If enacted, the proposed legislation would establish stricter criminal penalties for unsafe gun storage and expand the law to include unloaded firearms, accounting for the possibility of the child loading the gun themselves.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 646. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, 443-900-6582.

# **MPGVGrenWhitman\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: harvey, thomas

Position: FAV



## **Volunteer Testimony**

**SB 646- SUPPORT**

**Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage  
Requirements**

**Grenville Whitman, Kent County Citizens to Prevent Gun Violence**

**Phone: 443-691-9370**

**Address: P.O. Box 651, Rock Hall MD 21661**

**Legislative District 36**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**February 20, 2020**

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

Good afternoon, committee chair and members. My name is Gren Whitman. I live in Rock Hall, Kent Country, District 36, and am representing Kent County Citizens to Prevent Gun Violence. Our group supports Senate Bill 464.

If enacted, this bill will provide additional protections for children under 18 by strengthening safe-storage requirements for firearms. This will help to reduce accidental shootings as well as suicides and homicides.

This bill will reinforce a gun owner's accountability and responsibility for safe storage of his or her firearms.

I urge you to give Senate Bill 464 a favorable report.

Thank you.

# **MPGVKarrenHerren\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: herren, karen

Position: FAV



SB 646- SUPPORT  
Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage  
Requirements

Karen Herren, JD, Director of Legislative Affairs  
Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence  
February 20, 2020

Dear Chairman Smith and members of the Committee,

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence is a local, grassroots organization dedicated to reducing gun deaths and injuries throughout the state of Maryland, with a particular focus on reducing urban gun violence and gun suicide. **We urge the committee to vote FAVORABLY on Senate Bill 646/House Bill 636 to strengthen Maryland's law governing a child's access to firearms.**

The Giffords Law Center reports that fewer than 1 in 3 US homes with youth and firearms follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations to store all household firearms locked and unloaded. This means that more than 1.7 million youth live in households with firearms stored in a manner inconsistent with these safety guidelines. Gun owning parents are often misinformed about the risks associated with unsafe gun storage practices. Guided by literature and materials sponsored by gun manufacturers touting the use of firearms for safety and protection, well-meaning parents bringing a firearm into the home under this pretext of safety have statistically just placed their family at more risk.

Accidental gun deaths occur mainly in those under 25 years of age. In 2014, 2,549 children (age 0-19) died by gunshot. An additional 13,576 were injured. Meanwhile victims use guns for self-defense in less than 1% of contact crimes. Victims using a gun are no less likely to be injured after taking protective actions than victims using other forms of protective action. Self-defense gun use does not appear to be uniquely beneficial in reducing the likelihood of injury or property loss. On the contrary, a gun in the home is linked to higher rates of death and injury from firearms including increased risks of accidents, violent domestic altercations, and suicide. In other words, the risk to children of an unsecured weapon in the home is much greater than the alleged risks associated with a lack of quick access to a firearm for the purpose

of self defense. We must look to mediating the inherent risks of having firearms in homes with children.

Safer storage of firearms may help reduce youth and even young adult suicides. Firearms are a sadly effective method of attempting and completing suicide. Behavioral characteristics associated with adolescence, such as impulsivity, feelings of invincibility, and curiosity about firearms make this a particularly important age to protect. The sensible strategies set forth in this piece of legislation provide much needed protection while respecting the right to own and possess a firearm. **MPGV urges the committee to vote FAVORABLY on SB 646 to strengthen Maryland's law governing a child's access to firearms.**

# **MDAAP\_Pam Kasemeyer\_FAV\_SB0646**

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FAV



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

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: February 20, 2020

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

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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:**

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Richard A. Tabuteau  
410-244-7000



**MPGVLindaMcKibben\_Fav\_SB646**

Uploaded by: mckibben, linda

Position: FAV



## **Volunteer Testimony**

SB 646- SUPPORT

Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage  
Requirements

Dr. Linda McKibben (pediatrician)  
98 E Wayne Ave; Silver Spring MD 20901  
District 20  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
February 20, 2020

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

I support strengthening Maryland's Child Access Prevention laws through SB 646, because evidence tell us that: "Guidance alone, such as that offered by the American Academy of Pediatrics, has fallen short." (Azreal, Cohen, Salhi; Urban Health, 2018)

Gun safety, in addition to all other home safe practices, is a priority of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Extrapolating from national data, approximately 70% of children living in Maryland in families with gun-owners may be at-risk for experiencing injuries and trauma directly or indirectly from firearm- related suicide, unintentional injuries, and domestic homicides--all preventable by safer gun storage practices.

The specific risk varies by geographic location: The increased likelihood of death by suicide in rural areas of Maryland may be explained by males' preferences for and easy access to firearms; while the increased risk of non-domestic homicides in Baltimore and other urban areas may be explained by access to illegally obtained guns. Safer storage of guns could help to reduce the toll of gun violence in all of our communities.

Nationwide, at least one gun is present in one out of three homes with or without children under the age of 18 years. Of U.S. gun owners with children in their homes, only 30% store them in the safest manner (unloaded and locked); while 20% store them in the least safe manner (loaded and unlocked), exposing 7% of US children in the latter category (~4.6 million) to greatest excess risk for death or injuries due to firearms.

Simply providing information about procedures and devices, such as University of Michigan's "Parent's Guide to Home Firearm Safety," may increase the credibility of pediatricians to gun-owners. However, a clear objective of incorporating counselling routinely in pediatric practice is also to challenge the gun industry's messages about

safety, which may also promote the sale of guns to children or may not promote the AAP's full recommendations for safe gun storage (i.e., to store unloaded guns and ammunition separately in locked safes).

In summary, I believe that our state laws should more effectively encourage gun owners (and sellers) to store guns as if there were children present, keeping all of us safer from gun violence. We can start by helping gun-owning parents to know their responsibilities, and that the consequences of their inattention to gun-safety guidance or laws is that they will be held accountable for the injuries caused by unsupervised children's access to dangerous weapons in their homes.

# **LNichols\_Giffords\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: nichols, lindsay

Position: FAV



## Testimony in Support of H.B. 636 (Stein) Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements

**This testimony is submitted on behalf of Giffords and Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence to the Maryland House Judiciary Committee, February 19, 2020.**

Submitted by: Lindsay Nichols, Federal Policy Director, Giffords Law Center

On behalf of Giffords, the gun violence prevention organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, I would like to lend our support to the efforts of H.B. 636. This bill will strengthen the state’s law against providing a minor with unsupervised access to firearms. It will do this in several ways: by lifting the relevant age from 16 to 18 years old; by extending the law to both loaded and unloaded guns; by properly focusing the law’s language on the issue of access; and by creating graduated penalties for better compliance. Each of these changes is an important step that will make Maryland safer.

### PREVENTING UNDERAGE GUN ACCESS IS IMPERATIVE

This bill addresses a central responsibility of gun ownership: the duty to ensure that guns remain out of the hands of children and teenagers. Current Maryland law is unclear about the parameters of this responsibility. This bill will specify that gun owners have a responsibility to properly store their weapons whenever a child or teenager could gain access to the firearm.

Improperly secured guns in homes pose a clear risk, and too often result in tragic shootings, including unintentional discharges and suicides, that are all too common in America today. The best estimate is that 4.6 million minors in the US live in homes with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm.<sup>1</sup> These firearms are an unacceptable threat to our children.

Even when guns are kept locked, some gun owners have provided children or teenagers with access to the keys, combination, or other information that enables them to access a gun. This irresponsible behavior can lead to tragedies.

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<sup>1</sup> Deborah Azrael, Joanna Cohen, Carmel Salhi, and Matthew Miller, “Firearm Storage in Gun-owning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey,” *Journal of Urban Health* 95, no. 3 (2018): 295–304.



This bill addresses the variety of scenarios by establishing a clear and straightforward standard: Gun owners must ensure that no minor can gain access to their firearms. This standard is applicable to a range of circumstances and puts the onus where it belongs: on the gun owner to properly secure their weapons.

A clear and enforceable law on this topic will make a difference. Estimates suggest that modest increases in the number of American homes safely storing firearms could prevent almost a third of youth gun deaths due to suicide and unintentional firearm injury.<sup>2</sup> Tellingly, numerous studies over the past 20 years have found that child access prevention laws can reduce suicide and unintentional gun deaths and injuries among children and teens by up to 54%.<sup>3</sup> Through this bill, Maryland will join those states that have the strongest laws on this topic.

### TEENAGERS SHOULD NOT HAVE UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO GUNS

Unsecured guns threaten teenagers because they are a major source of weapons used in youth suicides and school shootings. The Wall Street Journal found that a gun from the home was used in 17 of 20 [school shootings](#) involving at least three victims since 1990. Preventing underage gun access can often prevent these horrific events.

According to the [National Institute of Mental Health](#), the human brain doesn't finish developing and maturing until the mid- to late-20s. The part of the brain that is responsible for planning, prioritizing and controlling impulses, is one of the last brain regions to mature. For this reason, teenagers should not have unsupervised access to guns.

Minors who live in homes with improperly secured firearms are substantially more likely to die by suicide. Guns are used in less than 1% of minors' suicide attempts, but account for over 40% of minors' [suicide deaths](#). Unsupervised gun access is therefore a major factor driving our nation's intolerably high rates of youth suicide: suicide is the second leading cause of death among children aged 10–14 and among young people aged 15–24.<sup>4</sup> In states where minors are more

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<sup>2</sup> Michael C. Monuteaux, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage With Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among US Youths," *JAMA Pediatrics* (2019).

<sup>3</sup> Emma C. Hamilton, et al., "Variability of Child Access Prevention Laws and Pediatric Firearm Injuries," *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* 84, no. 4 (2018): 613–619. See also, Peter Cummings, David C. Grossman, Frederick P. Rivara, and Thomas D. Koepsell, "State Gun Safe Storage Laws and Child Mortality Due to Firearms," *JAMA* 278, no. 13 (1997): 1084–1086; Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, "Association Between Youth-focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides," *JAMA* 292, no. 5 (2004): 594–601; Jeffrey DeSimone, Sara Markowitz, and Jing Xu, "Child Access Prevention Laws and Nonfatal Gun Injuries," *Southern Economic Journal* 80, no. 1 (2013): 5–25.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, "Association Between Youth-Focused Firearm Laws & Youth Suicides," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 292, no. 5



likely to use guns in suicides, minors are also much more likely to die by suicide. Laws that make it harder for minors to access unsecured guns and ammunition help to prevent these tragedies.

### UNLOADED GUNS CAN LEAD TO TRAGEDIES

A teenager bent on suicide or an atrocity may be determined to get a gun. The Internet provides teenagers with many videos and instructions on loading guns, so it is far too easy, once a teenager has access to a gun, for it to become loaded. That's why this bill will extend the obligation to keep loaded guns away from children and teenagers to unloaded guns. Improperly secured guns, whether they are loaded or unloaded, put kids at risk.

### PROPER ENFORCEMENT CAN SERVE JUSTICE AND PROTECT COMMUNITIES

This bill will create a system of graduated penalties that will improve storage practices and ensure proper enforcement so that unsecure guns do not lead to injuries or death. To address violations of the law, this bill provides:

- Any violation is punishable by up to 90 days.
- If a minor does in fact access the gun, the violation is punishable by up to two years.
- And if the minor does in fact access the gun and a person is injured or dies as a result, the violation of the law is punishable by up to five years.

This penalty structure would be consistent with the strongest laws in other jurisdictions, like California, D.C., and Florida.<sup>5</sup> They will also provide both law enforcement and the public with the incentives that will lead to better compliance. A prosecutor faced with evidence that a child had access to gun must decide whether prosecution is appropriate in the particular circumstances of the case. Similarly, a judge must decide what sentence will serve justice and best protect the community. This bill will ensure that prosecutors and court will have both the flexibility and guidance needed in these cases.

## CONCLUSION

Giffords appreciates this opportunity to support this important proposal to strengthen Maryland's gun laws. We strongly urge you to support this bill.

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(2004): 594–601.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Penal Code §§ 25100, 25110, 25200; D.C. Code § 7-2507.02; Fla. Stat. §§ 790.174(2), 784.05.



## **ABOUT GIFFORDS**

Giffords is a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives from gun violence.

Led by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and her husband, Navy combat veteran and retired NASA astronaut Captain Mark Kelly, Giffords inspires the courage of people from all walks of life to make America safer.



# **MPGVJaxonOMara\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: o'mara, jaxon

Position: FAV



## **Volunteer Testimony**

**SB 646- SUPPORT  
Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements  
Jaxon O'Mara  
Senate Judicial Proceeding Committee  
February 20, 2020**

Dear Mr. Chairman Smith and Members of The Committee,

Hello. My name is Jaxon O'Mara and I am here today to ask the committee to support SB646 to change the restrictions on child access to firearms. I have seen many of you before, just a few weeks ago when students from all across Maryland came to your offices and asked for your support on this legislation. I am the State Director of March For Our Lives Maryland as well as a first-year student at St. Mary's College. I work directly with students all across our state to coordinate and make our voices heard on both the state and national level. As an organizer for March For Our Lives, gun violence is my top issue and the subject that I spent all of my free time working on. However, this work is more than just advocacy to me. Gun violence prevention is personal. On February 14th, 2018, I watched as students ran for their lives in Parkland, Florida. 17 People were killed that day at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. I watched in horror and thanked my lucky stars that my community didn't have to go through anything like that. It turns out that my stars weren't so lucky. Just 5 weeks later, on March 20th, 2018, my community became the newest addition to a long list of deadly school shootings. A student entered my school with his father's glock and fatally shot my classmate, Jaelynn Willey, and wounded another before killing himself. Under current Maryland law, the shooter's access to the firearm

was legal. As a 17-year-old, his parents were not violating any law by allowing him unrestricted access to their firearm. I am asking the committee to vote on and pass HB636 to raise the age of access to 18 as well as close other loopholes that exist within this bill. No 16 or 17 year old should have this kind of dangerous, unrestricted access to a firearm and no other community should have to go through what mine did. By not changing this law, Maryland is choosing to continue to let communities like mine be torn apart by the gun violence epidemic. Jaelynn Willey should be celebrating her 18th birthday this coming Monday. She should be heading to the polls this November for the very first time, but all of that was stripped away from her. Don't let this happen to another family, another community, another school. Please support and encourage each and every one of your colleagues to support HB636. Thank you.

# **STAC Gun Lock\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: peterson, matt

Position: FAV



4FRONT

STUDENTS TAKING ACTION FOR CHANGE

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 646

Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements

Judicial Proceedings - February 20, 2020

### SUPPORT

Our names are Ari Geller, David Klein, Nathan Leder, Gabi Moshkatal, and Ilan Weiner and we are participants in a program called STAC. Students Taking Action for Change, or STAC, is a political advocacy program that allows Jewish teenagers in the greater Baltimore area to explore politics, learn about our political system, and gain experience using our voice to great positive change in our communities.

**We are writing you to ask for your support for Senate Bill 646 – Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements. This bill is a common-sense bill that will prevent minors from having access to guns in their homes.**

The laws that are currently in place don't require gunowners to lock their firearms, loaded or unloaded, in places where a minor can gain access to them. That means, right now there is nothing preventing a minor from finding a firearm in their own home and using it to inflict harm on themselves or others. Over and over again, we've seen school shootings, accidents, and suicides all involving firearms that were found in minor's homes. Senate Bill 646 would prevent this by requiring any gun owner in the state of Maryland to properly secure their firearms in their homes.

As a Jewish teen in 2020, I can directly relate the importance of this bill to teachings in Judaism. One aspect that can be related is *על דם רעך לא תאמוד* meaning, "do not stand idly by while your neighbor bleeds." In most recent years, it feels as though we have been doing exactly that. Shooting after shooting, it feels like we have been standing idly by, while failing to increase necessary safety measures. Another belief in Judaism, called *ועשתה מאקה לגגך*, directly translates to, "when you build a house, build a railing around the roof." Indirectly, this means that we should always preemptively consider the safety of others, even in something as private as our own house. Even though we may not believe that something as tragic as a shooting could happen to us, it's still very important to be aware of and care for the safety of everyone. Public safety should always be the number one priority, and currently, it does not seem like our state has built a "fence around their roof" to protect Maryland citizens.

In addition, we are all high school students and are constantly inundated with scenes of mass shootings taking place at schools around the country. Every day when we go to school, there's an underlying feeling of constant fear that we may become the next victims. Right now, there is nothing preventing a minor from taking their parents' guns and inflicting harm against themselves and others.

We should be able to have a sense of security knowing that we are safe from gun violence committed by a minor using their parents' guns.

We strongly encourage you to support Senate Bill 646. Prohibiting minors from gaining access to guns in their own homes. We hope that you agree with us that Senate Bill 646 is a commonsense solution that will prevent senseless acts of gun violence in the future. Thank you again for listening to what we have to say.

# **STAC\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: peterson, matt

Position: FAV



4FRONT

STUDENTS TAKING ACTION FOR CHANGE

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 646

Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements

Judicial Proceedings - February 20, 2020

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We strongly encourage you to support Senate Bill 646. Prohibiting minors from gaining access to guns in their own homes. We hope that you agree with us that Senate Bill 646 is a commonsense solution that will prevent senseless acts of gun violence in the future. Thank you again for listening to what we have to say.

# **MPGVGrenWhitman\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: whitman, gren

Position: FAV



## **Volunteer Testimony**

**SB 646- SUPPORT**

**Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage  
Requirements**

**Grenville Whitman, Kent County Citizens to Prevent Gun Violence**

**Phone: 443-691-9370**

**Address: P.O. Box 651, Rock Hall MD 21661**

**Legislative District 36**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**February 20, 2020**

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

Good afternoon, committee chair and members. My name is Gren Whitman. I live in Rock Hall, Kent Country, District 36, and am representing Kent County Citizens to Prevent Gun Violence. Our group supports Senate Bill 464.

If enacted, this bill will provide additional protections for children under 18 by strengthening safe-storage requirements for firearms. This will help to reduce accidental shootings as well as suicides and homicides.

This bill will reinforce a gun owner's accountability and responsibility for safe storage of his or her firearms.

I urge you to give Senate Bill 464 a favorable report.

Thank you.

**MPGVMelissaWilley\_FAV\_SB 646**

Uploaded by: willey, melissa

Position: FAV



## Volunteer Testimony

**SB 646- SUPPORT**  
**Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage**  
**Requirements**  
**Melissa Willey**  
**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**February 20, 2020**

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melissa Willey. I am here speaking on Senate Bill 646. Many of you know who I am. If you don't know me, you know my daughter's name Jaelynn Willey. She is the second oldest of 10 children, nine at the time of her death. She was a swimmer for club swim and high school swim. She loved her friends. She loved hanging out with her siblings. She had two cats, Twilight and Starlight, she slept with them every night. They would wait by the window until she came home every day. A lot of the time they still wait for her. Jaelynn was a kind sweet person. She loved going to the beach in Connecticut on family vacation. She loved school but hated to read. She was asked to prom Feb 13, 2018. She said yes to a young man who called her "JJ." He called her that because he couldn't pronounce Jaelynn. He was a foreign exchange student from Italy. She didn't get to go. She was murdered at school.

The shooter was a 17 year old. He had access to a gun he shouldn't have. Maryland's child access prevention bill only applies to children under the age of 16. The gun owner was not held responsible.

This has destroyed me as a mom, my children miss their sister terribly. My baby won't ever know her sister in a physical sense. She will only know her by pictures, my necklace, stories from what her sister and brothers tell her. She will only know Jaelynn from what we all tell her.

Seventy eight percent of school shooters under the age of 18 obtain the gun they use from their home or the home of a friend or family member. Safe storage can prevent these horrible events. I am requesting this law be passed in memory of Jaelynn and for Jaelynn. In hope that this never happens to another person again.

# **BPD\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: wirzberger, michelle

Position: FAV



# BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



**BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG**  
Mayor

**MICHAEL S. HARRISON**  
Police Commissioner

TO: The Honorable Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Michelle Wirzberger, Esq., Director of Government Affairs, Baltimore Police Dept.

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

DATE: February 20, 2020

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore Police Department **supports** Senate Bill 646.

Senate Bill 646 mandates that a person may not leave a loaded or unloaded firearm in a location where an unsupervised minor could gain access to the firearm and establishes penalties for instances when an unsupervised minor does gain access to the firearm and where that access causes harm to the minor or another person.

The safe storage requirements contained in this bill will promote responsible gun ownership and prevent unsupervised minors from accessing and using firearms. This will protect children from the pain and trauma of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries. In fact, an article in the *Journal of American Medical Association* pointed out that safe storage can help reduce the risk of suicide by firearm and accidental shootings among children and adolescents by 78% and 85% respectively<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to being sound policy to directly protect children, this bill will make it more difficult for unsecured firearms to be diverted to the underground market where they could be used in violent crimes. While the Baltimore Police Department is laser focused on reducing violent crime, it needs all the help it can get to reduce the number of illegal firearms in the possession of criminals.

Therefore, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 646.

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<sup>1</sup>Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2005; 293(6):707-714.

# **MPGVClintonWolcott\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: wolcott, clinton

Position: FAV





## Volunteer Testimony



### SB 646- SUPPORT

#### Child Access Prevention Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements

#### TESTIMONY OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES FORUM: ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND AND TEMPLE SINAI

#### Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 20, 2020

Dear Mr. Chairman Smith and Members of The Committee,

The Critical Issues Forum: Advocacy for Social Justice (CIF), which was formed by a group of synagogues in Montgomery County, appreciates the opportunity to provide its testimony in support of SB 646, to prevent child access to firearms. Comprised of Temple Beth Ami, Kol Shalom, and Adat Shalom, CIF represents over 1,750 households and 3 denominations of Judaism: Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist. CIF serves as a vehicle for our congregations to speak out on policy issues that relate to our shared values.

In addition to the three congregations that make up the Critical Issues Forum, Temple Sinai, which has an award-winning gun violence prevention program, also supports this testimony. Temple Sinai is a Reform congregation located in northwest Washington DC; its membership includes some 1200 households, more than half of which reside in Maryland, mainly in Montgomery County.

Jewish tradition emphasizes the sanctity and primary value of human life. The Bible commands us, "Thou shalt not murder" (Exodus 20:13). The Talmud teaches us that "he who takes one life it is as though he has destroyed the universe and he who saves one life it is as though he has saved the universe" (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5). Our tikkun olam/repair the world mission also remains strongly rooted in and inspired by Jewish traditions which urge us to eschew violence and protect life, e.g., Isaiah (2:4) urges us to "beat [our] swords into plowshares and [our] spears into pruning hooks," and Leviticus (19:16) tells us that we should "not stand idly by while [our] neighbor's blood is shed."

The dehumanizing of the human being and the carelessness with which human life is taken stand in direct violation of these affirmations of our tradition. Gun violence is a widespread problem in

our society and we must address the issue in its various forms, from mass shootings and hate crimes to domestic violence and suicide. CIF is committed to supporting common sense laws that save lives and thus affirm the value of all human life.

One of our most important responsibilities is preventing young people from gaining access to firearms. In this too we are guided by our Jewish legal and ethical traditions. Deuteronomy 22:8 commands us to take care to make our houses safe: "When you build a new house, you shall make a railing for your roof, so that you do not bring blood on your house if anyone should fall from it." This directive, which later commentators extended to raising vicious dogs and other risky behaviors, surely applies to ensuring that children cannot access firearms in our homes.

Maryland's current firearm access statute defines a minor as someone under the age of 16. The inadequacy of the limitation was tragically brought home by the murder of Jaelynn Willey in 2018 by a 17-year-old classmate while within the walls of Great Mills High School, here in Maryland, as well as the fatal school shooting of two students by a 16-year-old classmate in Santa Clarita, California, a few months ago.

Of course, the danger to children posed by unsecured firearms in the home is not limited to school shootings. In 2017, firearms were the third leading cause of death for youth under age 18, with 1,814 victims. Forty percent of those deaths were suicides and 51% were homicides.<sup>1</sup> According to the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, in 82% of youth suicides, the victim gained access to the firearm from a family member.<sup>2</sup> Nationwide, fewer than 1 in 3 homes with youth and firearms follow the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations to store all household firearms locked and unloaded, meaning that 15 million youth live in this unsafe situation.<sup>3</sup>

There is no doubt that Child Access Prevention (CAP) laws are successful in reducing youth suicide and gun injuries. A 1997 study determined that the enactment of the first 12 CAP laws were associated with a 19% decline in suicides among youth age 10-14 and 8.3% reduction for youth age 14-17.<sup>4</sup> A later study found that CAP laws were associated with a 10.8% reduction in firearm suicides overall and even an 11.1% reduction in suicide rates for older youth age 18-20.<sup>5</sup> As this study noted, "CAP laws may encourage gun owners ... [with young children] to adopt safe practices that endure" after their children are older, and "may increase awareness and change social norms to encourage gun owners to secure firearms..." CAP laws are also associated with a 26% average reduction in non-fatal gun injuries among children.

<sup>1</sup> Crifasi, Cassandra K., et al. "Storage Practices of US Gun Owners in 2016." *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 108, no. 4, 2018, pp. 532– 537., doi:10.2105/ajph.2017.304262.

<sup>2</sup> Harvard Injury Control Research Center, Youth Access to Firearms, <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/youth-access/>

<sup>3</sup> Monuteaux, Michael C., et al. "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage With Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among Youths *JAMA Pediatrics*, 13 May 2019, doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.1078.

<sup>4</sup> Cummings P, Grossman DC, Rivara FP, Koepsell TD. State gun safe storage laws and child mortality due to firearms. *JAMA*.1997;278:1084-1086.

<sup>5</sup> Webster, Daniel W., et al. "Association Between Youth-Focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides." *Jama*, vol. 292, no. 5, 8 Aug.

2004, p. 594., doi:10.1001/jama.292.5.594

Maryland leaders understood the importance of preventing firearm access to young people when they passed our state's existing law. However, the passage of time and experience in other states indicates that Maryland's standards must be strengthened. Critically, Maryland only requires that firearms be safeguarded for children under age 16, where 17 other states require this protection for youth under age 18. As the two tragic school shootings described above demonstrate, the current age limit is insufficient. Further, raising the age where safe storage is required will send an important message that safe storage is generally necessary. We must continue to motivate members of our communities to store their firearms safely.

In addition to raising the age where safe storage is required, SB 646 modifies the current law in other important respects. The current law requires that only loaded guns be safely stored. The bill requires safe storage of unloaded guns as well. The bill also changes the standard to impose liability where a minor "could" get access to the firearm, rather than the current standard, which only imposes liability if a minor "would" get access.

Finally, under current law, the maximum penalty for violating the law, no matter how dire the consequences, is a \$1000 fine. Under SB 646, the penalty solely for failing to safely store a firearm would be increased to include possible time in jail not to exceed 90 days. The potential penalty is graduated, with more strict penalties where a minor gains access to a firearm and where the firearm causes harm to the minor or another person. These changes will send a clear message concerning the potentially tragic consequences of unsecured firearms in the home.

These commonsense modifications to Maryland's current law for the safe storage of firearms will enhance the safety of our state's youth, protecting them and their parents from needless tragedy.

CIF, joined by Temple Sinai, urges the committee to support House Bill 636 to strengthen existing child access prevention provisions.

# **BRADYKelseyRogers\_FAV\_SB646**

Uploaded by: young, sophia

Position: FAV

Brady  
840 First St. NE Ste. 400  
Washington, DC 20002



Testimony of Kelsey Rogers, Senior Manager of State Policy, Brady  
Support for SB 646  
Before the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
February 20th, 2020

Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and other distinguished members of the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Founded in 1974, Brady works across Congress, courts, and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike, to take action, not sides, and end America's gun violence epidemic. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Jim and his wife, Sarah, led the fight to pass federal legislation requiring background checks for gun sales. Brady continues to uphold Jim and Sarah's legacy by uniting Americans from coast to coast, red and blue, young and old, liberal and conservative, to combat the epidemic of gun violence.

There are evidence-based policy solutions that we know will address the gun violence epidemic in Maryland. And make no mistake, gun violence is an epidemic, both nationwide and in the state of Maryland. Over 650 people die in Maryland each year, on average, due to firearms. Unlike some states, however, the majority of these deaths are due to homicide, which takes the lives of almost 400 Marylanders per year.<sup>1</sup> Much of this high homicide rate is driven by the disproportionate number of injuries and deaths in Baltimore: 2019 was the second deadliest year on record for the city, with nearly 350 homicides within a 365 day period.<sup>2</sup> Importantly for this legislation, firearms are also the leading cause of death among both kids and teens in the state of Maryland.<sup>3</sup>

**The bill before you today, SB 646, will encourage responsible gun ownership and safe storage norms and save lives by updating Maryland's existing child access prevention law to be more inclusive and ensure that fewer minors can, and do, access firearms.**

Nationwide, we know that too many minors are able to access firearms due to improperly stored firearms, frequently in the home. More than half of gun owners do not secure their firearms with locks or other safe

<sup>1</sup> Everytown for Gun Safety, "Gun Violence in Maryland," <https://everytownresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Every-State-Fact-Sheet-Maryland.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Travis Fedschun, "Baltimore Sees Second Deadliest Year On Record in 2019, Homicide Clearance Rate Under 40 Percent," Fox News, available at <https://www.foxnews.com/us/baltimore-homicide-rate-2019-crime-deadly-year-police-clearance>.

<sup>3</sup> "Gun Violence in Maryland."

storage methods, and almost 4.6 million minors live in homes with unsecured guns.<sup>4</sup> A study published by American Academy of Pediatrics in 2018 found that within a sample of parents who owned guns, only one third stored all household firearms locked and unloaded.<sup>5</sup> One study showed that over 70 percent of children reported knowing the storage location of the household firearm, and that 1 in 5 parents who reported that their child had never handled the household firearm were contradicted by their child's report. As a result, 70-90 percent of firearms used in unintentional shooting, school shootings and suicides by minors are acquired from home, or from the homes of friends or relatives.<sup>6</sup>

Unintentional firearm shootings involving minors are preventable. Studies show that keeping a gun locked and unloaded are associated with a protective effect against unintentional firearm injuries in homes with children and teenagers.<sup>7</sup> This finding is bolstered by recent research from 2018 showed that Child Access Prevention laws ("CAP laws") that require safe storage of firearms are associated with a significant reduction in unintentional pediatric firearm injuries.<sup>8</sup> School shootings are also facilitated by kids or teens having access to unsecured guns at home. In a review of all school shootings with at least three victims dead or injured since 1990, the majority of shooters acquired their gun from their household or from a relative's home.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, studies have found that for minors who have used a firearm to take their own life, 82 percent used a firearm belonging to a family member, and 64 percent of those guns were stored unlocked.<sup>10</sup> In 2017 alone, 729 children died by firearm suicide.<sup>11</sup> As is the case with adults, the availability of firearms and their lethal nature greatly increases the risk of a fatal outcome in a suicide attempt.<sup>12</sup> Firearms are the most lethal method used in suicide deaths, with a fatality rate of approximately 90 percent.<sup>13</sup> Frequently, the decision to harm oneself is made abruptly: A quarter of individuals who attempt suicide make the attempt within 5 minutes of deciding to end their lives.<sup>14</sup> This means that putting barriers in place to prevent easy access to lethal means

<sup>4</sup> Deborah Azrael, et al, "Firearm Storage in Gun-Ownning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey," *Journal of Urban Health* 95 (2018), available at [www.doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7](http://www.doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7).

<sup>5</sup> John Scott, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, "Firearm Storage in Homes With Children With Self-Harm Risk Factors," American Academy of Pediatrics (February 2018), <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2018/02/19/peds.2017-2600.info>.

<sup>6</sup> Renee M. Johnson, et al., "Who Are the Owners of Firearms Used in Adolescent Suicides?," *Suicide and Life-threatening Behavior* 40, no. 6 (2010): 609-611; Guohua Li, et al., "Factors Associated with the Intent of Firearm-related Injuries in Pediatric Trauma Patients," *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 150, no. 11 (1996): 1160-1165; John Woodrow Cox and Steven Rich, "'The Gun is Not in the Closet,'" *The Washington Post*, Aug. 1, 2018, available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2018/08/01/feature/school-shootings-should-parents-be-charged-for-failing-to-lock-up-guns-used-by-their-kids/>.

<sup>7</sup> David Grossman et al. "Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries," *JAMA*. 2005 Feb 9;293(6):707-14.

<sup>8</sup> Emma Hamilton, et al. "Variability of Child Access Prevention Laws and Pediatric Firearm Injuries." *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* 84, no. 4 (April 2018): 613-19.

<sup>9</sup> Tawnell Hobbes, "Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home," *The Wall Street Journal*, Apr. 5 2018, [www.wsj.com/articles/in-school-shootings-most-guns-come-from-home-1522920600](http://www.wsj.com/articles/in-school-shootings-most-guns-come-from-home-1522920600).

<sup>10</sup> The Rand Corporation, "The Effects of Child-Access Prevention Laws," March 2018, <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/child-access-prevention.html>, citing Webster, D. W., L. H. Freed, S. Frattaroli, and M. H. Wilson, "How Delinquent Youths Acquire Guns: Initial Versus Most Recent Gun Acquisitions," *Journal of Urban Health*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2002, pp. 60-69 and LaFree, G., and C. Birbeck, *Controlling New Mexico Juveniles' Possession of Firearms*, Albuquerque, N.M.: New Mexico Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, Working Paper 27, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention & Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Web-based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Injury Mortality Reports, 1999-2013, for National, Regional, and States* (Jan. 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Madeline Drexler, *Guns and Suicide: The Hidden Toll*, Harvard Public Health at 24, 26, [https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine\\_article/guns-suicide/](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine_article/guns-suicide/).

<sup>13</sup> Matthew Miller, "The Epidemiology of Case Fatality Rates for Suicide in the Northeast\*1." *Annals of Emergency Medicine* 43, no. 6 (2004): 723-30.

<sup>14</sup> Simon, Olga Von, Alan C. Swann, Kenneth E. Powell, Lloyd B. Potter, M-j Kresnow and Patrick O'Carroll. "Characteristics of impulsive suicide attempts and attempters." *Suicide & life-threatening behavior* 32 1 Suppl (2001): 49-59.

can delay a suicide attempt in the event of a crisis, giving someone who is struggling more time to seek help. In fact, research supports that storing firearms locked and unloaded can be an effective measure to reduce suicide attempts.<sup>15</sup>

Various studies have found that CAP laws are associated with reduced rates of suicide and unintentional firearms deaths and injuries among children and teens by up to 54 percent.<sup>16</sup> Research suggests that CAP laws also increase safe storage behavior<sup>17</sup> and one recent study has found that a modest increase in safe firearm storage could prevent up to 32 percent of suicide and unintentional firearm fatalities among youth, and another predicted that child access prevention law enactment can reduce the annual number of self-inflicted gun injuries by 26 percent.<sup>18</sup> In fact, unsafe storage was least likely among families in states with both CAP laws and stronger firearm legislation.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the data shows that state CAP laws are associated with reductions in *overall* suicide rates among 14-17 year olds, meaning that minors are not attempting suicide by other methods when firearms are inaccessible.<sup>20</sup> The risks associated with access to firearms do not simply dissipate when one turns 16. In fact, firearms are used in 42 percent of suicides by 16 and 17-year olds.<sup>21</sup> It is appropriate that this proposed bill expands the obligation to prevent all minors under the age of 18 from accessing firearms.

Further, this proposed law does not infringe upon an individual's Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms in the home—rather, responsible firearms ownership comes with a duty to ensure that these lethal weapons are kept out of the hands of minors who cannot yet responsibly handle firearms themselves. Research clearly shows that robust child access prevention and safe storage laws help protect children and reduce the tragic deaths of firearm suicide, and unintentional shootings by kids and teens in homes across America.

**Brady strongly encourages the House Judiciary Committee to vote in favor of SB 646, which mandates that all firearms must be safely stored in the presence of those under 18 to prevent injuries and fatalities.**

<sup>15</sup> Shenassa ED, Rogers ML, Spalding KL, Roberts MB. "Safer Storage of Firearms At Home and Risk of Suicide: A Study of Protective Factors in a Nationally Representative Sample," *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. 2004; 58(10):841-848.

<sup>16</sup> Emma C. Hamilton, et al., "Variability of Child Access Prevention Laws and Pediatric Firearm Injuries," *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* 84, no. 4 (2018): 613–619.

<sup>17</sup> Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, "Child Access Prevention," <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/gun-laws/policy-areas/child-consumer-safety/child-access-prevention/>.

<sup>18</sup> Michael C. Monuteaux et al., "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage with Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Deaths Among U.S. Youths," *JAMA Pediatrics* 173 no. 657 (2019); Jeffrey Desimone, "Child Access Prevention Laws and Nonfatal Gun Injuries," 80 *Southern Economic Journal* no. 1 (2013).

<sup>19</sup> Prickett, Kate C, et al. "State Firearm Laws, Firearm Ownership, and Safety Practices Among Families of Preschool-Aged Children." *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 104, no. 6, June 2014, pp. 1080–1086.

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Webster, et al. "Association Between Youth-Focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides," *JAMA*. 2004 Aug 4;292(5):594-601.

<sup>21</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and States, 1999 to 2017. Calculated using the average suicide injury deaths among 16-17-year olds from 2013-2017.

# **Jeffrey Adams\_Unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Adams, Jeffrey

Position: UNF



Jeffrey Adams  
2209A Amoss Mill Road  
Pylesville, MD 21132  
[jeffadams55@gmail.com](mailto:jeffadams55@gmail.com)

**HB636 (SB646) OPPOSE**  
**HB1257 (SB816) OPPOSE**  
**HB910 (SB958) OPPOSE**  
**HB591 OPPOSE**  
**HB1501 OPPOSE**  
**HB1104 OPPOSE**  
**HB1261 OPPOSE**

Honorable State of Maryland House Judiciary Committee,

I find myself again this year as a Maryland resident under the threat of becoming a common criminal simply by my choice to be a law-abiding owner of firearms.

I am a peace-loving 50 year resident of Maryland, I raised my family here, vacationed in Ocean City and Deep Creek Lake, I retired from government service at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland has been a wonderful place to live, until now. I feel threatened because later in life I chose to pick recreational shooting as a hobby that I could enjoy with friends and family.

I do everything right; my firearms are locked in a safe; my ammunition is locked in yet another safe, but somehow, according to some legislators in Maryland, my ownership of firearms is causing crimes of gun violence to increase across the state. I fail to see the connection, since the only time my guns come out of my safe is when they are under my complete control and used for target shooting and recreational purposes only. The obvious truth is there is no connection, plain and simple.

It's all too obvious that criminals don't care about or complete background checks; they don't care how many rounds are in the magazine, the more the better; they don't care who they get a gun from; they don't lock up their guns at night; they don't report stolen firearms, they're probably holding one, and that list goes on and on...

I find the lack of general knowledge about firearms and the steps it takes to legally purchase a firearm in Maryland by some of our elected officials surprising. I feel that they could work toward better understanding what they are trying to legislate, because when the misinformation flows through them to the anti-gun groups and to the public, it incites fear and mistrust, and discourages open and honest conversation. The Second Amendment community stands for safety, education, responsibility, accountability, and freedom. Let's all try that for a while.

Yours in Freedom,  
Jeffrey Adams  
2209A Amoss Mill Road  
Pylesville, MD 21132

# **ChristopherBenedict\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: benedict, Christopher

Position: UNF

Good afternoon,

My name is Christopher Benedict, I live at 702 Dayspring Dr, Odenton, MD 21113. I am writing to voice **my opposition** to the following bills:

- **HB636 and SB646**
- **HB910 and SB958**
- **HB1257 and SB816**
- **HB1261**
- **HB1078**

I believe this collection of bills is an unacceptable overreach being made by legislators who fail to understand that stricter gun control laws DO NOT impact criminals' access to firearms. The only people who will be impacted by this legislation are law-abiding citizens who wish to exercise their 2nd amendment rights. The root cause of these crimes needs to be addressed, and if that cannot be addressed, more citizens should be responsibly armed to protect themselves, their families, and those around them.

Specifically, I am vehemently opposed to the idea that legislation can be enacted to control what I print on my 3D printer. I don't even understand how that would be enforced. Secondly, The expansion of the definition of an assault long gun is absolutely unreasonable. The controls in place are already unacceptable, adding more control will not keep anyone safer. Lastly, state legislators should have no say over how school districts allocate funds with the exception of funds provided by the state itself.

Sincerely,  
Christopher L. Benedict  
chrisbdaemon@gmail.com

# **ChristopherBodine\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: benedict, Christopher

Position: UNF

Good afternoon,

My name is Christopher Benedict, I live at 702 Dayspring Dr, Odenton, MD 21113. I am writing to voice **my opposition** to the following bills:

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- **HB910 and SB958**
- **HB1257 and SB816**
- **HB1261**
- **HB1078**

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Sincerely,  
Christopher L. Benedict  
chrisbdaemon@gmail.com

## **RichardBodine\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Bodine, Richard

Position: UNF

Richard Bodine  
8120 Overlook Drive  
Frederick, MD 21702  
[arlby@hotmail.com](mailto:arlby@hotmail.com)

The following are the Senate Bills in Committee that I **strongly oppose**.

**SB39**  
**SB208**  
**SB422**  
**SB646**  
**SB958**  
**SB968**

Sincerely, Richard Lyle Bodine

NOTE: I am the son of the son of Democrats. All my ancestors on both sides have been Democrats for well over 140 years.  
In the past 20 years more than half of my relatives have left the Democratic Party.

Stop taking Bloomberg's \$\$\$\$

**Dr. Edward W. Christoffers\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Christoffers, Dr Edward

Position: UNF



February 18, 2020

Dr. Edward W. Christoffers  
28505 Cedar Point Road  
Easton, MD 21601-822

[ewc1944@gmail.com](mailto:ewc1944@gmail.com)

443-746-2433

I am writing today to express my opposition to a series of gun control legislation due to be heard soon. These pieces of legislation while well intended will do little or nothing to solve the violence we see today.

The 2018 FBI unified Crime Report notes that there were 14,123 homicides during the year. 1,515 involved knives or sharp objects (10.72%), 672 involved hands and feet (4.76%) and only 532 involved a rifle or shotgun (3.77%). Modern sporting rifled were only a small percentage of that total. This compares to 11,000 drunk driving deaths, 47,000 suicides and the 330,000 lives lost to abortions. One should also consider that the suicide rate in Australia remained constant after they adopted their gun banning legislation.

A CDC Study reported a 94% reduction in firearms fatalities from 1933-2017 while at the same time the private ownership and concealed carry of firearms increased dramatically. If firearms were to blame for the violence in our society one would assume that gun related deaths would be much higher due to the increase in legally owned guns.

#### HB 636 Access to Firearms Storage **OPPOSE**

This legislation would make myself and my wife significantly less safe since it would require us to store our self defense firearms in a way that would make them unavailable for use should our rural home be a target for thieves or home invaders.

#### HB 910 and HB 958 Untraceable Firearms. **OPPOSE**

This legislation is a solution looking for a problem. Americans have been making firearms of all types since Colonial times. Those firearms used in some shootings were manufactured and sold illegally. This bill would encumber all honest citizens who build firearms for the pleasure of having a hand-crafted firearm they built to use hunting and at the range.

#### HB 591 and HB1501 Lost or Regulated Firearm Reporting **OPPOSE**

What would this legislation accomplish except for creating a list of lost or stolen firearms? Rarely are firearms found at a crime traced back to the criminal. This law would at best trace the firearm back to the owner who reported it missing or stolen. On it's face it would create additional work for an already overburdened law enforcement agency with no significant benefit to public safety.

#### HB1104 Regulated Firearms Transfers **OPPOSE**

Apparently, designed to eliminate the fictitious gun show and private transfer/sale issue. Sales of firearms at gun shows are already regulated if the seller is in the business of selling firearms. Since most sellers at shows are licensed FFL's all sales are conducted with a background check. Those who are selling a few of their private collection are in the distinct minority. All online sales where the seller resides in a different state must be conducted with an FFL to FFL transfer and the required background check. All instate sales are done face to face and the seller can assess the purchaser and terminate the sale if they suspect the purchaser to be a prohibited person. this legislation would make it illegal for me to loan one of my firearms to a relative or friend. For instance, I and a group of my friends are at deer camp and my friends rifle malfunctions. Based on this legislation I could not loan my friend of many years my spare firearm unless I accompanied him to his deer stand are remained with him while he hunted. This legislation is burdensome and unnecessary.

#### HB 1257 Licensed Firearms Dealers **OPPOSE**

This bill would place an additional burden on already heavily regulated legal business establishments. It is excessive regulation with no real public benefit, and it is designed to force legal firearms retailers out of business.

#### HB 1261 Assault Long Guns and Copycat Weapons **OPPOSE**

As noted in my introduction firearms of this type (Modern Semi-automatic Sporting Arms) are involved in an incredibly small number of homicides. They have been the victim of a massive public relations campaign designed to dupe the public into believing that they are evil. If these types of firearms were a problem one would think that they would be involved in many more homicides. Estimates indicate that there were over 16 million modern semi-automatic sporting arms legally owned by American citizens. Politicians and the media have created a myth about these firearms which is patently untrue. John F. Kennedy once said, "The greatest enemy of the truth is very often not the lie-deliberate, contrives and dishonest – but the myth – persistent, persuasive and unrealistic." This is the myth developed around these firearms and it is totally unrealistic. Finally, this legislation is written so poorly that it would include most shotguns used for hunting and sport shooting along with most if not all semi-automatic firearms.

**Chris K Cockrum\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Cochrum, Chris

Position: UNF

My wife and I oppose the following gun bills because we are fed up with infringing limits on our Second Amendment / Civil rights:

- HB636 (SB646)
- HB910 (SB958)
- HB591
- HB1104
- HB1261
- HB1257 (SB816)
- HB1078
- HB1501

We will be voting according to this issue in future elections.

Sincerely,

Chris K Cockrum

Lee W Cockrum

485 Greenwood Street

Odenton, MD 21113

[ckc@cockrum.net](mailto:ckc@cockrum.net) / [lee@cockrum.net](mailto:lee@cockrum.net)

<https://cockrum.net>

## **Edward W. Cotter\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Cotter, Edward

Position: UNF

Edward W. Cotter  
239 Treherne Rd  
Timonium, MD 21093  
[ewc@georgetown.edu](mailto:ewc@georgetown.edu)

*Re: "Untraceable Firearms"*

[HB910](#) and [SB958](#)

I oppose these bills because I would like to spend some time building my own firearms when I cut back my business to semi-retirement. This has been a legal activity for a long time.

*"Assault Long Guns and Copycat Weapons"*

[HB1261](#)

I oppose this bill. I've been interested in purchasing an AR-15 at some point. Now you want to tax them to oblivion? I've read that more murders are committed with hammers than with rifles. Why do you need this? What's next?

*"Licensed Firearms Dealers (Firearms Dealers' Safety Act)"*

[HB1257](#)

I oppose this bill on principle, although it does not affect me directly. If you want to do this, apply these standards to all businesses. It's unfair to single out licensed firearms dealers.

*"Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements"*

[HB636](#) and [SB646](#)

I view these bills with great trepidation and oppose them. I have no minors in my home, but I have a developmentally disabled daughter who lives at home. All guns are locked, either in a gun safe or with an internal gun lock. Any determined person "could" possibly overcome these security measures. My daughter knows better than to attempt to defeat the codes on the safes. A burglar is likely to give up before he can break the codes. Why should I be legally at risk for what "might" happen?

*"Permit to Carry, Wear, or Transport - Required Courses"*

[SB422](#)

I oppose this bill. I have taken many firearms courses, including ones which deal with "the competent handling of a firearm" and with "situational awareness". To obtain a Wear and Carry Permit in Maryland, which is recognized as constitutionally guaranteed in many states, I now need to sit through the same two courses every year? Training is good, but this is ridiculous. Carry permit holders commit crimes at a lower rate nationwide than police. Why should the most responsible subgroup in America be treated as if they were mindless?

# **JAMES COX\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Cox, James

Position: UNF

RE: OPPOSE all new gun control bills and HB 1261 –

**HB0004**  
**HB0035**  
**HB0302**  
**HB0591**  
**HB0636**  
**HB0910**  
**HB1078**  
**HB1104**  
**HB1257**  
**HB1261**

Dear elected official and staff:

I stand with the Firearms Policy Coalition and other pro-rights groups in OPPOSITION to HB 1261 and the dozens of other gun control bills introduced this session.

These new proposals will only crack down on those wishing to defend themselves with commonly owned guns--it will not make a difference to the criminal element. MD already has some of the strongest gun control laws in the nation.

These new proposed measures are untenable, especially because we all know criminals are not going to follow them at all. We know this because after the last big gun control laws in Maryland passed it had no significant impact on gun crime; in fact it, increased and hasn't come down.

It's time representatives in Annapolis finally stand up and defend the entire Bill of Rights and stop catering to anti-rights extremists like Michael Bloomberg.

Please make a stand and OPPOSE HB 1261, as well as the dozens of other proposed gun control bills.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
JAMES COX  
[mrg2130@verizon.net](mailto:mrg2130@verizon.net)

3714 SENECA GARDEN RD  
BALTIMORE, MD 21220



**Derrick faith\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Faith, Derrick

Position: UNF

To our representatives concerning HB636/SB646, HB910/SB958, HB1257/SB816, HB958/SB910, HB591, HB1078, HB1501, HB1261.

You are our elected representatives and thus are duty bound to represent the wishes of your constituents.

We the people are **strongly opposed to ANY** additional regulations on law-abiding gun owners in MD. These laws will do nothing to prevent crime and will only further infringe on the rights of the good people that you are supposed to represent.

Not only will these ridiculous laws be completely ineffective against crime, but they will serve only to turn good law-abiding working tax payers into instant criminals.

Instead of making more laws like these we would all be better served if you actually made harsher penalties for the criminals who will always ignore such laws.

Derrick faith  
14438 hollow rd  
Hancock, md 21750  
[Dfshooter62@gmail.com](mailto:Dfshooter62@gmail.com)

# **MarylandFarmBureau\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Ferguson, Colby

Position: UNF



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 20, 2020

To: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Opposition of SB646 - Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony opposing SB 646. This bill would make it illegal to store or leave a loaded or unloaded firearm (pistol, rifle, shotgun) in a place where a minor, meaning anyone under 18, could gain access. If not kept in a safe, somewhere to prohibit unintended persons being able to access the firearm or an external safety lock, an individual could face up to no more than 90 days in jail or a \$1,000 fine, or both. If the unsupervised minor gains access to the firearm, then the owner of the firearm could face up to 2 years in prison, 2,500 fine or both. Finally, if the unsupervised minor uses that firearm harm another person, then the firearm owner is subject to 5 years in prison, \$5,000 in fines or both.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:** We believe in and support the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which protects the right of the people to keep and bear Arms. We oppose any legislation that would further restrict the purchase and ownership by law-abiding citizens of firearms, handgun, long arm, autoloader or manual loader.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU RESPECTFULLY OPPOSES SB 646**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

*For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396*

# **Jesse\_Ferguson-UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Ferguson, Jesse

Position: UNF

## Written Testimony of Jesse Ferguson, resident of Caroline County, Maryland in Opposition to SB0646

I am a hard-working husband, father of two young girls, and a native of Maryland's Eastern Shore. I am also an avid hunter, firearms collector, and participant in all manners of competition involving shooting and firearms. I am opposed to SB0646 and urge an unfavorable report from the committee. This bill proports to be a solution to a number of issues:

- deaths of children due to school shootings
- suicide by children with a firearm
- deaths of children due to firearms accidents

However, the bill narrowly focuses on the storage of firearms within the home instead of taking into account the broader issues that are at the root of most of these tragedies.

### **Firearms Accidents**

Law-abiding owners of firearms want to be safe and responsible. The firearm industry itself has had a tremendously positive affect on the number of fatal firearm accidents. According to CDC data, there has been a 38% decline between the years 2005 and 2018. The number of children who die due to fatal firearm accidents is at the lowest rate ever recorded.

### **Child Suicide**

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for children between the age of 1-17. However, the leading method of suicide employed is suffocation, not firearms:



identify students in distress before their behavior escalates to the level of eliciting concerns about safety.

A key finding in regard to weapons (emphasis added):

**Most attackers used firearms, and firearms were most often acquired from the home:**

Many of the attackers were able to access firearms from the home of their parents or another close relative. *While many of the firearms were unsecured, in several cases the attackers were able to gain access to firearms that were secured in a locked gun safe or case. It should be further noted, however, that some attackers used knives instead of firearms to perpetrate their attacks.* Therefore, a threat assessment should explore if a student has access to any weapons, with a particular focus on weapons access at home. Schools, parents, and law enforcement must work together rapidly to restrict access to weapons in those cases when students pose a risk of harm to themselves or others.

Again, there is a root cause in these tragic events is not simply access to firearms or other weapons. An intent to do harm to others is not eliminated when access to firearms is prevented.

Source: <https://www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/ussc-analysis-of-targeted-school-violence.pdf>

SB0646 turns Maryland's existing firearm storage requirements into a vaguely worded, overly broad trap for law-abiding firearm owners. It offers no solutions to the root issues at play with the various situations where lives are tragically lost.

Again, I urge the committee to return an unfavorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

Jesse Ferguson



## **DonaldGarrison\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Garrison, Donald

Position: UNF

OPPOSED TO:

- HB636 and SB646
- HB910 and SB958
- HB1257 and SB816
- HB1261
- HB1078

Donald Garrison  
[Boatsbm1@verizon.net](mailto:Boatsbm1@verizon.net)  
1901 Bowen way  
Forest Hill Md 21050

I oppose any kind of gun legislation that keep me from enjoy shoot and hunting and the ability to teach my family. I am a Patriot member of the NRA and have use their help in the safe use of my guns and teach my family.

The only thing I see is legislation to restrict my freedom as a law abiding citizen and nothing to stop the gangs in Baltimore from destroying the city. Charge me more tax and fee and restrict my right a citizen of Md and the USA

Put criminals behind bars. Do criminals get back ground check? Are they retired from the military, have tax paying job or the just buy government legislator, so citizens are unarmed and not able to defend themselves. I want all government legislator to give up their arm protection and see they will walk the streets.

Put legislation forward that protect citizens and not restrict their freedom and laws that put criminals behind bars and get good conservative judges that follow the constitution and the state of Md.

**David J. Geiman Jr.\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Geiman, David

Position: UNF

I writing you to express my **opposition** to the following bills.

**HB 636**

**HB 910**

**HB 1257**

**HB 958**

**HB 591**

**HB 1104**

**HB1261**

**HB1501**

All of these bills hinder, restrict or penalize the law abiding citizen for owning, selling, transferring, repairing or loaning a firearm to other law abiding citizens. I think the focus should be on arresting, prosecuting and jailing (for the full sentence) the criminals in this state who are just running wild.

As a law abiding citizen and gun owner I would never loan a firearm to someone whether a friend or family member who shouldn't have it. The legislature continues to dance around the real problem crime! My personal opinion is that the education system in this state educate our young people on firearms and the proper use of them, and how deadly they can be.

It is also my personal opinion that if the murderers that commit these mass shootings were facing the death penalty they may think twice.

Please feel free to share my comments with your colleges and the committee.

THANKS,

David J. Geiman Jr.

Taneytown, MD 21787

djgeiman1@gmail.com

**Robert Gillman\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Gillman, Robert

Position: UNF

**The Bill #'s I OPPOSE:**

**HB 636**  
**SB 646**  
**HB 910**  
**SB 958**  
**HB 1257**  
**SB 816**  
**HB 958**  
**SB 910**  
**HB 1078**  
**HB 591**  
**HB 1501**  
**HB 1104**  
**HB 1261**

Thank you for your time and providing this opportunity for our voice to be heard.

I write this with great concern as a 20+ year contributing member to Maryland society, a 30+ year service member, a father, and a law abiding citizen. I've seen the effects of gun control both stateside and abroad and deeply oppose what the state of Maryland has currently in place as well as these proposed measures. Our Second Amendment is second only to our first and is so in order to protect and preserve that right. As such I'm formally stating my opposition to the bills listed below.

Robert Gillman  
Address: 2917 Kildaire Dr. Parkville, MD 21234  
[Tffrost@comcast.net](mailto:Tffrost@comcast.net)

# **Noah Hayward\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Hayward, Noah

Position: UNF

Dear Sir or Madam,

I urge you to oppose the following bills (listed in order of their currently scheduled hearings):

- SB646/HB636 (Public Safety - Access to Firearms)
- SB816/HB1257 (Public Safety -Licensed Firearms Dealers)
- SB958/HB910 (Criminal Law - Untraceable Firearms)
- HB1078 (Education - No Funding for Firearms Act)
- HB591 (Public Safety - Lost or Stolen Regulated Firearms - Reporting)
- HB1104 (Public Safety - Regulated Firearm - Transfer)
- HB1501 (Public Safety - Regulated Firearm - Reporting Lost or Stolen)
- HB1261 (Public Safety - Assault Long Guns and Copycat Weapons)

None of these bills, if they were to become laws, would improve public safety. Instead, already-law-abiding citizens, hunters, and licensed firearm dealers (like myself and many of my family and friends) would only be further burdened, while criminals would only continue to ignore the law.

To the extent you are able, through reasonable legislation, I respectfully request that you work to ensure that Maryland's existing (and already overly-restrictive, in my opinion) laws are enforced, rather than passing more laws, based on feelings - or worse, politics - that will not actually contribute to the good of the people of Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration,

Noah Hayward

12307 Ericole Court  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
[noahjhayward@gmail.com](mailto:noahjhayward@gmail.com)  
443-831-4900



# **James Hersey\_Unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Hersey, James

Position: UNF

I oppose the following list of stunningly bad anti-firearms and anti-firearms dealer legislative bills:

HB636 SB646

HB910 SB958

HB1257 SB816

HB1078

HB591 HB1501

HB1104 HB1261

It would seem that many of the members of the Maryland State legislature have gone out of their way this year to attack the rights of legitimate firearms owners, while doing nothing worthwhile to actually stem crime. These bills are an example of legislative actions continuing to do nothing but unnecessarily over regulating, while not alleviating any problem. This is simply pandering to the far left and squandering the public purse.

Vigorous enforcement of existing laws would be more than sufficient to combat crime, combined with the judicial system actually convicting *and* incarcerating criminals. The city of Baltimore is a prime example of the actual problem of the revolving door lack of justice. Further restricting lawful firearms owners is not the answer. Pandering to the anti-firearms segment is not the answer.

As a voter and a tax payer I vehemently oppose the listed bills.

James Hersey  
5503 Woodridge Dr  
Waldorf MD 20601  
[herseyj@hotmail.com](mailto:herseyj@hotmail.com)

## **markHeavner\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Hevener, Mark

Position: UNF

From:  
Mark Hevener  
106 Village Way  
Mt. Airy, Maryland 21771

Email:  
[trauma915@gmail.com](mailto:trauma915@gmail.com)

Concerning:  
**HB636 (SB646) OPPOSED**  
**HB910 (SB958) OPPOSED**  
**HB958 (SB910) OPPOSED**  
**HB519 OPPOSED**  
**HB1104 OPPOSED**  
**HB1261 OPPOSED**  
**SB646 (HB636) OPPOSED**  
**SB816 (HB1257) OPPOSED**  
**HB1501 OPPOSED**  
**HB1078 OPPOSED**

Each and every one of these Bills only affects and restricts law abiding gun owners and does nothing to reduce criminal activity use of firearms.

These Bills, in effect, cost restrict the average income citizens from exercising their constitutional right under the 2nd Amendment. They actually penalize citizens for exercising their right to bear arms.

I see these proposals as an attack upon my freedoms and will support judicial lawsuits to challenge the same.

Please give due consideration to the above statement.

## **PeterHundertnark\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Hundertmark, Peter

Position: UNF

I oppose the following bills coming up for review.

**HB636 (SB646)**

**SB646 (HB636) & SB816 (HB1257)**

**HB910 (SB958) & HB1257 (SB816)**

**HB1078**

**HB598 (SB910)**

**HB591, HB1104**

More attempts to take rights away from law abiding citizens. Criminals by definition do not follow the law, so these will NOT have the effect intended.

Just to make criminals out of the very people who follow the law. I will not support any delegate who approves or votes for these bills.

Thank you for your time.

Peter Hundertmark  
7390 Pindell School Rd.  
Fulton, MD 20759

[Phundertmark@hotmail.com](mailto:Phundertmark@hotmail.com)

## **Matthew P kopp-unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Kopp, Matthew

Position: UNF

Re: RE: OPPOSE all new gun control bills and HB 1261

Dear elected official and staff:

I stand with the Firearms Policy Coalition and other pro-rights groups in **OPPOSITION to HB 1261 and the dozens of other gun control bills introduced this session.**

These new proposals will only crack down on those wishing to defend themselves with commonly owned guns--it will not make a difference to the criminal element. MD already has some of the strongest gun control laws in the nation.

These new proposed measures are untenable, especially because we all know criminals are not going to follow them at all. We know this because after the last big gun control laws in Maryland passed it had no significant impact on gun crime; in fact it, increased and hasn't come down.

It's time representatives in Annapolis finally stand up and defend the entire Bill of Rights and stop catering to anti-rights extremists like Michael Bloomberg.

Please make a stand and OPPOSE HB 1261, as well as the dozens of other proposed gun control bills.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Matthew P kopp  
[fireemt13@yahoo.com](mailto:fireemt13@yahoo.com)

2118 OLD EASTERN AVE  
MIDDLE RIVER, MD 21220



# **Kenneth Kurzmiller \_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Kurzmiller, Kenneth

Position: UNF

**I strongly oppose the following bills.**

**HB636 (SB646)**

**HB910 ( SB958)**

**HB1257 (SB816)**

**HB958 (SB910)**

**HB1078**

**HB591**

**HB1104**

**HB1501**

**HB1261**

I do not believe these bills will promote gun safety. However I do believe these bills will make personal safety more difficult.

I would like us to consider more gun legislation. That which promote gun ownership, possession and make it less expensive “To keep and bear arms”.

Thank you,  
Kenneth Kurzmiller  
20123 Gunpowder Road  
Manchester, Maryland 21102

**Torrey R. Lambert\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Lambert, Torrey

Position: UNF

Torrey R. Lambert

2920 Duncan Rd

White Hall, MD

21161

[Torrey.R.Lambert@gmail.com](mailto:Torrey.R.Lambert@gmail.com)

As a registered, active voter in Maryland, I OPPOSE the following House / Senate Bills in the 2020 Session. I would request you do not support these bills.

1. HB591: Public Safety – Lost or Stolen Regulated Firearm – Reporting
2. HB636 / (SB646): Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements
3. HB910 / (SB958): Criminal Law - Untraceable Firearms
4. HB1078 / (SB910): Public Safety - Education - Firearm Funding (No Funding for Firearms Act)
5. HB1104: Public Safety - Regulated Firearms - Transfer
6. HB1257: Public Safety - Licensed Firearms Dealers (Firearms Dealers' Safety Act)
7. HB1501: Public Safety – Regulated Firearms – Reporting Loss or Theft

Regards

Torrey R. Lambert

## **LouisLibertini\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Libertini, Louise

Position: UNF

I oppose the following Gun Bills.

HB 636

SB646

SB816

HB1257

HB910

SB958

HB1078

HB591

HB1104

HB1261

These bills will do nothing to deter the criminal. They will just infringe upon the honest citizen's ability to protect themselves and their property.

Louis Libertini  
915 Cold Spring Road  
Middle River, Md., 21220  
[captlou59@verizon.net](mailto:captlou59@verizon.net)

# **Stoney Creek Fishing & Hunting Club\_unf\_SB 646**

Uploaded by: Mathison, Theodore

Position: UNF

**Stoney Creek Fishing & Hunting Club**  
**9090 Ft. Smallwood Rd.**  
**Pasadena, MD 21122**

February 19, 2020 and February 20, 2020

**HB 636 and SB 646: Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements**  
**Oppose**

The Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club, which has some 300 members and has been in existence for over 70 years, **OPPOSES HB 636/SB 646**. We oppose these Bills because they create requirements that are unrealistic and impossible to meet; they impose penalties for violations that are unwarranted and abusive, and they ignore the safety benefits of an existing State program. In addition, the Bills apparently are in conflict with a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that pertains to the private use and storage of firearms.

HB 636/SB 646 would amend Criminal Law Article 4-104 to: change the definition of a child from “under the age of 16 years” to under the age of 18 years and identify the person as a “minor” versus “a child”; add unloaded firearms to the loaded firearm storage requirements of the law; and substitute the word “could” for “should” under the storage criteria.

These Bills also impose very harsh penalties for violation of the proposed revisions to the Article. The penalties are presented in three tiers depending upon the nature of the alleged violation.

1. A minor does not gain access to a firearm: Imprisonment not exceeding 90 days, or a fine of \$1,000, or both.
2. A minor gains access to a firearm: Imprisonment not exceeding 2 years, or a fine not exceeding \$2,500, or both;
3. A minor gains access to a firearm and the firearm causes injury to the minor or someone else: Imprisonment not exceeding 5 years, or a fine not exceeding \$5,000, or both.

Our first concern is the unrealistic requirements of these Bills. They add “unloaded firearms” to loaded firearms that must be secured. An unloaded firearm does not present a hazard to anyone. Without ammunition, it is an inert object. Unloaded firearms could include modern day replicas of both black powder and cartridge firearms that are hung over fireplaces, displayed in glass covered display cases, etc. It appears that under the provisions of the Bills such displays would be prohibited because a minor could gain access to the firearms therein.



HB 636 and SB 646: Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements  
Testimony of Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club

Oppose

February 19 and 20, 2020

Page 2

Most troubling is the substitution in the Bills of the term “could” for “would” relative to gaining access to a firearm. The use of “could” opens the door to a very broad interpretation of the circumstances under which either loaded or unloaded firearms must be secured. According to *writingexplained.org*, “would” expresses certainty, intent or both, whereas “could” expresses “possibility”. Thus, the latter implies an individual must be clairvoyant as to whom, how, when and where someone might gain access to a firearm.

This places a tremendous burden upon firearm owners because they must secure all firearms, loaded or unloaded, against every and any conceivable eventuality. Parents would have to keep the keys to locked firearms in their possession at all times less a minor find the keys hidden in the house, safe combinations would have to be hidden etc. One could imagine a home owner, who keeps a loaded firearm in his or her night stand for protection against home intruders, having to keep the firearm locked and then sleep with the key on a chain around his/her neck. It would be a “nightmare.” In that the possibilities of access are infinite, the provisions of these Bills are unrealistic and unworkable.

We are very troubled, as well, by the harsh penalties, as outlined above, for any violation of Article 4-104. They are excessive penalties for what is more likely an error of omission than error of commission. Also as noted above, replica firearms could be placed on display within one’s home. If under the three tier punishment scheme, a minor “could” gain access to one of these replicas but did not do so, the parent or guardians would still be subject to 90 days in prison, and a \$1,000 fine, or both. In other words, the parent is penalized because something “might have happened” This is Orwellian mind control.

The Bills remove the exemption from the storage requirements if “the child”, i.e. “minor”, has a certificate of firearm and hunter safety issued under Section 10-301.1 of the Natural Resources Article”. This appears to reflect a lack of understanding of the State’s longstanding Hunter Safety Program and the tremendous volunteer effort that has gone into making this program a huge success. We at Stoney Creek Fishing & Hunting Club have been involved in the Program since the 1980’s and have graduated upwards of 15,000 students, all taught by volunteers. The course is rigorous and not all students pass the course to qualify for a hunting license. The course emphasizes firearm safety again, and again as the name implies. We even emphasize to parents and the students the need and their responsibility to secure their firearms when not in use. Firearm locks and other means to secure firearms are addressed. Thus, to ignore this training and exclude these individuals from the Bills’ list of exemptions makes no sense.

HB 636 and SB 646: Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements  
Testimony of Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club

Oppose

February 19 and 20, 2020

Page 3

Lastly, it is our understanding HB 636/SB 646 are in conflict with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the case of the District of Columbia vs. Heller (2008). The Court held as unconstitutional the District's law that required a firearm to be disassembled, or locked up at all times in one's home. We suspect these bills would suffer the same fate when challenged in court.

These Bills use a "sledge hammer" approach in trying to keep firearms out of the hands of those individuals who are not trained in their use, or for other reasons should not have access to firearms. We applaud this. However, we believe a better approach than HB 636/SB 646 would be a State-sponsored/supported education program via various media outlets that would underscore the need to secure properly firearms. The prospect of severe penalties tend to drive people into silence rather than being proactive.

In view of the many shortcomings of HB 636/SB 646, as enumerated above, we respectfully ask these Bills receive unfavorable reports.



Theodore E. Mathison  
Ch, Legislative Committee,  
410-987-9591  
Email: tem2@verizon.net

## **Ian Rus Maxwell\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Maxwell, Ian

Position: UNF

**Bill #'s: SB646 (HB636): "Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements"**

I am writing to express my **opposition to SB646 (HB636)** as its passage would turn me into a criminal. My 16-year old daughter is able to gain access to my firearm safes, and thus, loaded firearms when she is unsupervised. I have, intentionally, given her the codes/combinations to those safes in order that she may protect herself - should the need arise in crisis situation - during those times when she is alone in our home.

My daughter has been instructed in the safe and effective use of firearms and there is no one on this Earth I would trust more in the handling a firearm. To amend Maryland law to make allowing access to my safes so she could defend herself in a crisis would be is an enormous injustice.

Sincerely,  
Ian Rus Maxwell

Name: Ian Rus Maxwell  
Address: 18307 Crestmount Road Boyds MD, 20841  
ianrus.maxwell@gmail.com

## **NickNechay\_unf\_Sb646**

Uploaded by: Nechay, Nick

Position: UNF

Dear Committee,

I am writing this email to express my opposition to the following gun laws:

- HB636
- HB1257
- HB910
- HB1078
- HB958
- HB591
- HB1501
- HB1104
- HB1261

As a Maryland resident for my entire life, I feel that our constitutional "right to bear arms" is already greatly limited. The addition of these bills will do nothing to make our state a safer place. It will only limit the ability of tax paying/ law abiding citizen to protect themselves and their families. Please stop limiting the freedom of the responsible citizens of Maryland.

**Nick Nechay**

Independent Refrigeration Services, Inc

Phone: (717) 227-2200

Email: [nnechay@irsnh3.com](mailto:nnechay@irsnh3.com)

# **George H Nitzel III\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Nitzell, George

Position: UNF

**HB636 (SB646) - OPPOSE**  
**HB910 (SB958) - OPPOSE**  
**HB1257 (SB816) - OPPOSE**  
**HB958 (SB910) - OPPOSE**  
**HB591 - OPPOSE**  
**HB1104 - OPPOSE**  
**HB1261 - OPPOSE**  
**HB1078 - OPPOSE**  
**HB1501 - OPPOSE**

My Name is George H Nitzel III  
My Address is 11300 Pulaski Highway, White Marsh MD 21162  
My email address is [george@ghnitzel.com](mailto:george@ghnitzel.com)

As a US Citizen, Tax Payer, Business Owner, Christian, and Lawfully Abiding Maryland Resident I take my constitutional rights seriously.

Any and all of the Gun bills listed below are an infringement to my constitutional Second Amendment Rights.

The Second amendment states a well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED.

Therefore I oppose any and all of these bills that alter, impose or infringe my rights under the Second Amendment .

Respectfully  
George H Nitzel III



11300 Pulaski Highway  
White Marsh, MD 21162  
Phone: 410-335-0200  
Fax: 410-335-3477  
Cell: 443-463-3337



## **HalNoer\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Noer, Hal

Position: UNF

In OPPOSITION to HB636 (SB646)  
Access to Firearms

I am opposed to this Bill because it exposes me to two major risks.

Risk A- Death. As a firearm owner, with no children in the house or visiting; I keep an unloaded shotgun on a high shelf in my bedroom closet. Over my medicine cabinet I keep some shotgun shells. This medicine cabinet has no counter under it to climb on. If an attacker enters, I can grab the shotgun, retreat to the bathroom, lock the door, then load the shotgun for defense.

This unloaded gun is flat on a shelf and invisible to anyone under 6 ½ feet tall- yet instantly accessible in an emergency. No safe is this fast. This provides both safety and ready access for self-defense.

Following the proposed bill would slow down my access to a lifesaving device in the most critical seconds; likely resulting in my death from an attack.

Risk B- Arrest due to the vague word "COULD". I could store my unloaded long guns in the attic, accessible via a pull down rope which anyone 6 ft tall could reach. This is an uninhabited storage area with a 3x10 ft floored area. It is highly unlikely a minor, none of whom are living in or visiting my house, will find the box- it COULD happen.

I could have some long guns stored in a simple wooden box with a padlock, facing the wall in the back corner of my closet behind my clothes. It's unlikely a minor would find the box and while pulling it out drop the box and it break open- it COULD happen.

Many guns stored in plastic cases protected by a padlock. The plastic can easily be cut or pried open. This would be very unusual, yet it COULD happen.

If a manufacturer develops a biometric or other such inactivating device, it would not meet the requirements in the Bill. Such devices are under development.

The Bill would make the above storage IN MY PRIVATE HOME a criminal act.

Respectfully;  
Hal Noer  
Resident of Frederick County, MD

hnre @ xecu.net

## **Art\_Novotny\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Novotny, Art

Position: UNF

## **OPPOSE SB646**

Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements.

Art Novotny  
2/20/2020

Hopefully you have heard and understood my oral testimony about how dangerously arbitrary and vague the phrase “minor *could* gain access” is, and how easily the budding handyman and metalworker I was at age sixteen *could* have accessed just about any gun safe readily available to the general public. I’ll also remind you to please check out the “Lockpickinglawyer” channel on Youtube to see just how easily someone *could* gain access to...just about anything.

In addition to those points, this bill really feels like the government coming into my house, and even my bedroom (where I keep my gun safe), a place where the government has absolutely no business. Shouldn’t the lock on my front door be enough? Are the police going to periodically come in to check to see if my guns are locked up? Will they bring a minor with a grinder and crow bar to test out how secure my safe really is? While they are here, they should at least check out my liquor cabinet, kitchen knives, and car keys to make sure unsupervised minors could not gain access to them.

Finally, what about times when it is good for an unsupervised minor to gain access to firearms? These are just a few among the first results searching online for, “child shoots burglar”

<https://www.news9.com/story/19858704/12-year-old-girl-shoots-intruder-during-home-invasion>

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/ct-alabama-boy-shoots-intruder-20160501-story.html>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/south-carolina-boy-13-fatally-shoots-burglar-wounds-second-suspect-n462006>

Under this bill, the owner of the firearm that was used to avert a (bigger) tragedy would face a \$5000 fine and 5 years imprisonment because they allowed their children to protect themselves from armed home invaders. Surely, any parent would face jail time to keep their children safe... but in this case it would be ridiculous.

**Katie\_Novotny\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Novotny, Katie

Position: UNF

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*Written Testimony of Katie Novotny in Opposition of SB646*

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February 19, 2020

I am a member of Multiple Gun Rights organizations. Maryland Shall Issue, Associated Gun Clubs, Maryland State Rifle and Pistol Association, and the National Rifle Association. I am a certified Range Safety Officer with the NRA. I compete in multiple shooting events such as Steel Challenge, 3-gun, small bore, and vintage military rifle matches. I am an avid firearms collector. I oppose SB646.

This bill changes the word “would” to “could”. “Could” is used to indicate possibility. “Could gain access”. We all know that kids can do all kinds of surprising things. The internet is a big wide world where all kinds of things can be learned. Things like how to pick a lock. A quick internet search of the terms “how to pick a lock” brings up pages and pages of results. Complete with pictures, videos, links to where to purchase the tools required, or simply a list of household items that could be used. There is a YouTube channel called LockPickingLawyer.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm9K6rby98W8JigLoZO6h6FQ/featured> He is a lawyer who lives in Maryland and creates videos which evaluate security devices. This illustrates how easy it is to access information on how to pick locks, although he has a disclaimer stating to not use any of his information for illegal purposes. He shows how easily defeated with readily available items, locks actually are.

<https://youtu.be/o0IYq8AhMJc> This video shows how easily a gun lock box is picked with readily available tools. <https://youtu.be/Chu4mvEUc5I> This video shows a gun safe being opened with an orange juice bottle. Hundreds of videos are available, and it really is quite educational on what items to avoid purchasing. The rabbit hole that is YouTube aside, this information illustrates how easily locks are defeated, and how pointless legislation like this is. Nearly any adolescent child has access to the internet at some point, and therefore can obtain this kind of information. This is why changing the word “could” from “would” is such a terrible idea.

Changing the law to include access to unloaded firearms instead of loaded firearms is also a gross overstep. Unloaded firearms are no danger at all, except as a blunt object, similar to a brick, and much less dangerous than items available in most households; Kitchen knives, box cutters, saws, power tools, household chemicals, and prescription drugs.

This proposed law is a direct violation of DC v. Heller, which protects the right to have a firearm for self-defense in the home.

As a firearms owner, I take responsibility for having my firearms stored safely. This protects my investment from damage caused by improper storage, as well as from theft. This bill, however is so hopelessly vague, that I don't know what is allowed. Historically, preventing a child from gaining ready access to a loaded firearm has been adequate. Law requires new handguns to leave the FFL with a lock. Project ChildSafe will provide cable locks for free. Under this proposed law, that is not adequate, because although it will prevent the loading and firing of a firearm, this bill prohibits contact with even an unloaded firearm. This law allows prosecution of a firearms owner who thought they had properly

secured their firearms in a manner considered generally reasonable by most people. However if a child does gain access, and does not even have to do anything with the firearm, if the police find out, under penalties in this bill, that person would then become a prohibited person. Over the possibility of a child coming in contact with an unloaded firearm.

There needs to be balance between public safety and rights. The current law does a fair job of treading that line. Unfortunately, sometimes things still happen. This bill is also unenforceable, unless the police are planning on going door to door to inspect storage devices. The only way anyone would likely know this law was violated was if the 3<sup>rd</sup> scenario happened, that a child does gain access and injures another or themselves. In that case, how is tacking on another meaningless sentence helping anyone heal from tragedy?

Because of these reasons above, I request an unfavorable report.

Katherine Novotny

District 7

443-617-7568

Katie.Novotny@hotmail.com

# **Pennak\_President\_MSI\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Pennak, Mark

Position: UNF





February 19, 2020

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MARK W. PENNAK, PRESIDENT, MSI, IN OPPOSITION TO HB 636 AND SB 646**

I am the President of Maryland Shall Issue (“MSI”). Maryland Shall Issue is an all-volunteer, non-partisan organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of gun owners’ rights in Maryland. It seeks to educate the community about the right of self-protection, the safe handling of firearms, and the responsibility that goes with carrying a firearm in public. I am also an attorney and an active member of the Bar of Maryland and of the Bar of the District of Columbia. I recently retired from the United States Department of Justice, where I practiced law for 33 years in the Courts of Appeals of the United States and in the Supreme Court of the United States. I am an expert in Maryland firearms law, federal firearms law and the law of self-defense. I am also a Maryland State Police certified handgun instructor for the Maryland Wear and Carry Permit and the Maryland Handgun Qualification License (“HQL”) and a certified NRA instructor in rifle, pistol, personal protection in the home, personal protection outside the home and in muzzle loader. I appear today as President of MSI in opposition to HB 636 and SB 646

### **The Bills:**

These bills would amend Md Code Criminal Law § 4-104. Specifically, current law provides that “[a] person may not store or leave a loaded firearm in a location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised child would gain access to the firearm.” A child is defined for these purposes as a person “under the age of 16 years.” This bill would change the definition of a child to a person under the age of 18 years and modifies the prohibition to provide that a “person may not store or leave a loaded OR UNLOADED firearm in a location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised child COULD gain access to the firearm, UNLESS THE FIREARM IS LOCKED.” The bills will likewise repeal the exception in existing law that allows a child to have access to firearms if the child has a certificate of firearm and hunter safety issued under § 16 10–301.1 of the Natural Resources Article.

It also changes the punishment. Current law punishes a violation of this section as “a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$1,000.” No prison time is imposed under current law. These bills would create three new layers of offense with increasing punishments. Merely leaving a LOADED or UNLOADED firearm in a “location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised MINOR COULD gain access to the firearm,” is punishable with 90 days imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine. At the next level, leaving a LOADED or UNLOADED firearm in a “location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised MINOR COULD gain access to the firearm,” and the minor actually gains access is punishable with 2 years of imprisonment and a fine of \$2,500. And at the final level, leaving a LOADED or UNLOADED firearm in a “location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised MINOR COULD gain

access to the firearm,” and “THE FIREARM CAUSES HARM TO THE MINOR OR TO 3 ANOTHER PERSON” is punishable with 5 years of imprisonment and a fine of \$5,000.

## **THE BILLS ARE DRACONIAN, IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLY WITH AND PATENTLY UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

### **Youth Hunting:**

As noted, these bills repeal the exception found in current law for a child with a State-issued hunter safety certificate. Such an exception absolutely necessary for youth hunting in this state. It is a tradition for hunters in this state and elsewhere to instruct their sons and daughters in hunting, often starting at a very young age. When such minors are ready (in the judgment of their parents), they are typically allowed to hunt on their own. Such hunting often occurs on the farms or other property of the parents or on property owned by family friends. These bills would criminalize such hunting, thus effectively banning youth hunting in Maryland. The number of hunters is already dropping in Maryland. Yet, Maryland, like other states, is heavily dependent on the fees and taxes paid by hunters to manage wildlife and promote conservation. Thus, Maryland, like other states, is actively seeking to encourage more hunting. See [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/maryland-hopes-to-recruit-new-hunters--and-promote-conservation/2018/11/29/69cccf3e-ecf3-11e8-96d4-0d23f2aaad09\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/maryland-hopes-to-recruit-new-hunters--and-promote-conservation/2018/11/29/69cccf3e-ecf3-11e8-96d4-0d23f2aaad09_story.html) (“The Maryland Department of Natural Resources received \$11 million last year, including \$7.8 million from hunting expenditures”).

This public policy fully applies to youth hunting. Indeed, Maryland law accords “a 1-year gratis hunting license to a Maryland resident under the age of 16 years who has successfully completed a hunter safety course,” MD Code Nat. Resources §10-301.1(f)(1), and creates special youth hunting days for hunters under the age of 16. See <https://dnr.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Pages/JrHunters.aspx>. Over time, these bills, if enacted, will radically reduce youth hunting and hunting in general in Maryland. The General Assembly should seek input from the Department of Natural Resources before enacting these bills.

We know of no state that bans access to minors who are hunters. See, e.g., N.Y. Penal Code 265.45 (“It shall not be a violation of this section to allow a person less than sixteen years of age access to: (i) a firearm, rifle or shotgun for lawful use as authorized under paragraph seven or seven-e of subdivision a of section 265.20 of this article, or (ii) a rifle or shotgun for lawful use as authorized by article eleven of the environmental conservation law when such person less than sixteen years of age is the holder of a hunting license or permit and such rifle or shotgun is used in accordance with such law.”).

These bills are a breach of trust. In 2013, when Governor O’Malley pushed hard for enactment of the Firearms Safety Act of 2013 (SB 281), he wrote an email to hunters in Maryland stating that “Let me be clear: We are committed to protecting hunters and their traditions. That’s why we specifically carved out shotguns and rifles from the licensing requirements of our bill.” <https://www.washingtontimes.com/blog/guns/2013/feb/12/miller-omalley-emails-licensed-hunters-push-gun-co/>. (Emphasis added). As a licensed hunter in Maryland, the undersigned received that email. There is no more fundamental aspect to “hunters and their traditions” than youth hunting. Now, a mere six years later, “hunters

and their traditions” are under direct assault by these bills. That promise has been broken. The lesson is clear: the General Assembly cannot be trusted.

### **Due Process:**

These bills change Section 4-104 from a safe storage measure into a truly draconian and vague law that would severely punish otherwise innocent conduct. It now will severely punish any storage that “could” result in access to the firearm, not “would.” That change is highly significant. The Maryland courts commonly refer to standard dictionaries in interpreting legislative language. *Marriott Employees Federal Credit Union v. Motor Vehicle Admin.* 346 Md. 437, 449, 697 A.2d 455 (1997). Under virtually all dictionary definitions in this context, “could” is defined in terms of what is “possible.” See, e.g., <https://www.englishpage.com/modals/could.html> (“‘Could’ is a modal verb used to express possibility”); The American Heritage Dictionary 232, 330 (2d college ed.1985) (noting that “‘could’ is the past tense of “can,” which is defined as “[u]sed to indicate possibility or probability.”). See also *Keene v. Ault*, 2005 WL 1177905 at \*7 (D. Iowa 2005) (applying “could” in this manner).

Changing “would” to “could” is a radical change because it would literally require prescience for owner to know what a child, any child, under the age of 18 “could” do. As a rule, [t]he law does not require prescience.” *Raffucci Alvarado v. Sonia Zayas*, 816 F.2d 818, 820 (1st Cir. 1987). See also *Goldsborough v. De Witt*, 171 Md. 225, 242 (1937) (“The law does not require infallibility of decision in its fiduciaries nor prescience”); *Ditto v. Stoneberger*, 145 Md.App. 469, 499 (2002) (“The law requires proof of probable, not merely possible, facts, including causal relations”), quoting *Charlton Bros. Transportation Co. v. Garrettson*, 188 Md. 85, 94 (1947). Under this “could” standard, the mere possibility of access would be sufficient. The bills are not limited to minors in the household and thus include the entire universe of minors (other than intruders). The bills thus include minors with tools and knowledge sufficient to crack a safe or break into locked storage. Such knowledge is obtainable from the Internet and the requisite tools are easily found at any hardware store.

There is no safe harbor provision in these bills. There is no *mens rea* requirement. The bills impose strict liability upon gun owners if any minor “could” break into any storage and obtain access. Even worse, if the minor somehow does gain access, the gun owner can go to jail for 2 years. These bills make the gun owner into a guarantor against the misconduct of every minor. That’s absurd burden to place on any law-abiding person. Such absolute guarantor liability is not even imposed under tort law, much less criminal law. See Restatement (Second) of Torts § 448. Upon the effective date of these bills, every gun owner in Maryland would be immediately guilty of this crime because no gun owner would ever be able to say that it was impossible for a minor to gain access. Arbitrary or discriminatory enforcement is thus virtually guaranteed. See *McDonnell v. United States*, 136 S. Ct. 2355, 2373–74 (2016) (noting that “we cannot construe a criminal statute on the assumption that the Government will ‘use it responsibly’”) (quoting *United States v. Stevens*, 559 U.S. 460, 480 (2010)).

Such a law violates substantive due process. The State may not constitutionally condition the legality of possession of constitutionally protected property, such as a firearm, on compliance with prerequisites that are literally impossible to achieve. See, e.g., *Usery v.*

*Turner Elkhorn Mining Co.*, 428 U.S. 1, 15 (1976) (noting a due process violation is established where “the legislature has acted in an arbitrary and irrational way”); *MHC Financing Ltd. Partnership v. City of San Rafael*, 714 F.3d 1118 (9th Cir. 2013), *cert. denied*, 571 U.S. 1125 (2014) (“We will strike down a statute on substantive due process grounds if it is arbitrary and irrational.”). See also *Broderick v. Rosner*, 294 U.S. 629, 639 (1935) (Brandeis, J.) (invalidating a statute, in part, because it “imposes a condition which, as here applied, is legally impossible of fulfillment”). These bills fail that test.

Alternatively, the use of “could” also makes these bills hopelessly vague and thus a violation of the Due Process Clause. A penal statute must “define the criminal offense with sufficient definiteness that ordinary people can understand what conduct is prohibited and in a manner that does not encourage arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement.” *Kolender v. Lawson*, 461 U.S. 352, 357 (1983). See also *United States v. Davis*, 139 S. Ct. 2319, 2325 (2019) (“Vague statutes threaten to hand responsibility for defining crimes to relatively unaccountable police, prosecutors, and judges, eroding the people’s ability to oversee the creation of the laws they are expected to abide.”). If the bills do not demand the impossible, then the language of the bills in their use of “could” is divorced from any notice of what is prohibited, leaving gun owners literally at sea concerning what is required and what is not. Such a law is unconstitutionally vague.

## **Second Amendment:**

Such criminalization of home possession of a firearm is also unconstitutional under *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008). Under *Heller*, responsible, law-abiding adults have a constitutional right to keep firearms in the home in order to exercise their right of armed self-defense. Thus, in *Heller*, the Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional DC’s safe storage law that required a firearm to be “disassembled or bound by a trigger lock at all times.” (Id. at 628). The Court held this requirement unconstitutionally burdened the right to self-defense in the home because “[t]his makes it impossible for citizens to use them [firearms] for the core lawful purpose of self-defense.” (Id. at 630).

These bills are even worse than the DC law struck down in *Heller*. Here, the gun owner is criminally liable if a minor “could” gain access, even though the LOADED OR UNLOADED firearm was fully locked up or disassembled. That sort of law is unprecedented. For example, in *Jackson v. San Francisco*, 746 F.3d 953 (9th Cir. 2014), *cert. denied*, 135 S.Ct. 2799 (2015), the Ninth Circuit sustained a San Francisco safe storage law that exempted from its coverage a “handgun is carried on the person of an individual over the age of 18.” These bills make no such exemption. Indeed, under these bills such carriage would be illegal, as a minor “could” gain access to a firearm carried on the person. The Supreme Court denied review of the Ninth Circuit’s decision over the vigorous dissent of Justice Thomas and Justice Scalia, who opined that even that law was contrary to *Heller*. Id. 135 S.Ct. at 2800-02. The Ninth Circuit’s decision is indeed an outlier. No other circuit has allowed such a law and such strict laws are virtually unknown. See, e.g., Cal. Penal Code § 25100 (a person may not “**negligently store**[] or leave[] a firearm in a location where the person knows, or reasonably should know, that **a child is likely to gain access** to the firearm without the permission of the child’s parent or legal guardian, **unless reasonable action is taken by the person to secure the firearm against access by the child**”) (emphasis supplied). In sum, these bills are blatantly unconstitutional under *Heller*.

What's worse, the bills would change the focus of existing law on a "loaded" gun into a ban on access to both a loaded and an **unloaded** gun. Reasonable limits on access to a loaded gun may make sense, as an untrained child might accidentally discharge a loaded gun. But to criminalize the possibility that a minor "could" access to an **unloaded** gun makes no sense at all. An unloaded gun is no more dangerous than a brick and far less dangerous than a knife or a baseball bat or dozens of other household items. In *Heller*, the Court stated that its ruling invalidating the DC law did not suggest "the invalidity of laws regulating the storage of firearms to prevent accidents." (554 U.S. at 632). That *dicta* cannot be read as swallowing the holding in *Heller*. Thus, storage laws may not make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the owner to use the firearm in self-defense. For example, there is no risk of an "accident" with an unloaded gun. Criminalizing storage of an unloaded gun is thus particularly unjustifiable under *Heller*. Indeed, what's next? Bans on unsupervised access to kitchen knives? We urge an unfavorable report on these extreme bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark W. Pennak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Mark W. Pennak  
President, Maryland Shall Issue, Inc.  
mpennak@marylandshallissue.org

# Cooper Pollard-UNF\_SB646

Uploaded by: Poland, Cooper

Position: UNF

**HB636 (SB646), SB646 (HB636) & SB816 (HB1257), HB910 (SB958) & HB1257 (SB816), HB1078 , HB598 (SB910), HB591, HB1104, HB1104 OPPOSED**

Good Morning,

I am emailing you to tell you how unfair the current gun bills are that are being proposed. As an avid hunter and sport shooter none of these bills will actually help keep guns out of the hands of criminals or felons. These bills will hurt ALL gun owners and especially those that may struggle financially already as the re-registration fee costs more than the ATF charges when you register a firearm with them. I do support the requirement of a background check being made when any gun is sold. I believe more responsible laws such as a universal background checks for ALL new gun owners and firearms training such as is required per the conceal carry laws in Maryland now would be a great way to educate and protect new gun owners. Limiting magazine size, outlawing "assault weapons", and requiring re-registration of guns is not a deterrent for the criminals we are trying to prevent from obtaining firearms. A better deterrent would be to make and enforce laws that imprison felons caught with firearms to a mandatory jail time of no less than 5 years.

I hope you will see the lack of depth in these proposed gun bills and push for more good common sense gun laws that would actually help your constituents when it comes to gun related issues. Please vote no on these bills.

Thank You,  
Cooper Pollard

**[pollards\\_towing@earthlink.net](mailto:pollards_towing@earthlink.net)**

**Casey L. Raiford\_UNF\_SB#646**

Uploaded by: Raiford, Casey

Position: UNF



Thank you for your service to the state of Maryland and your support of Second Amendment rights.

I'm writing to express my **opposition to:**

**HB0004**

**HB0035**

**HB0302**

**HB0591**

**HB0636**

**HB0910**

**HB1078**

**HB1104**

**HB1257**

**HB1261**

Casey L. Raiford  
2287 Snowfall Ct  
Odenton, MD 21113  
CR07@gmail.com

Thanks again;

# **Casey L. Raiford\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Raiford, Casey

Position: UNF

Thank you for your service to the state of Maryland and your support of Second Amendment rights.

I'm writing to express my **opposition to:**

**HB0004**

**HB0035**

**HB0302**

**HB0591**

**HB0636**

**HB0910**

**HB1078**

**HB1104**

**HB1257**

**HB1261**

Casey L. Raiford  
2287 Snowfall Ct  
Odenton, MD 21113  
CR07@gmail.com

Thanks again;

**Jeffrey Scott Rayner Jr\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Rayner jr., JEFFREY

Position: UNF

**OPPOSED TO THE FOLLOWING**

**HB636, HB910, HB958, HB591, HB1104, HB1078, HB1261, HB1501, SB816, SB646**

Jeffrey Scott Rayner Jr  
268 Braxton way edgewater Md 21037  
[srayner15@gmail.com](mailto:srayner15@gmail.com)

# **Jeffrey Scott Rayner Jr\_unf\_SB816**

Uploaded by: Rayner jr., JEFFREY

Position: UNF

**OPPOSED TO THE FOLLOWING**

**HB636, HB910, HB958, HB591, HB1104, HB1078, HB1261, HB1501, SB816, SB646**

Jeffrey Scott Rayner Jr  
268 Braxton way edgewater Md 21037  
[srayner15@gmail.com](mailto:srayner15@gmail.com)

# **Marty Restucci\_Unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Restucci, Marty

Position: UNF



**OPPOSED TO THE FOLLOWING**

**HB636, HB910, HB958, HB591, HB1104, HB1078, HB1261, HB1501, SB816, SB646**

These Gun bills need to stop attacking our 2nd Amendment

Go after the bad guys they won't abide by them you are just making the good guy a criminal

I hunt & fish the Chesapeake Bay these Bills are just wrong!!!!!!!

Stop this Many are leaving the State NOW!

Marty Restucci

McGlothlin Road

Conowingo MD. 21918

[marty.restucci@gmail.com](mailto:marty.restucci@gmail.com)

# **National Shooting Sports Foundation\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: SANTOS, TREVOR

Position: UNF



## NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

Headquarters: 11 Mile Hill Road, Newtown, CT 06470-2359

400 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 475, Washington, D.C. 20001

202-220-1340 ext. 205    tsantos@nssf.org

### **Trevor W. Santos**

Director,

Government Relations - State Affairs

February 20, 2020

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**SENATE BILL 646  
OPPOSE**

### **Re: Senate Bill 646 - Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

On behalf of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and our industry members located throughout the state of Maryland, I write today to express our opposition to Senate Bill 646 (“SB 646”). SB 646 seeks to prohibit access to a firearm by a minor; prohibit a person from storing or leaving a loaded or unloaded firearm in a location where an unsupervised minor could gain access to the firearm and an unsupervised minor does gain access to the firearm; and imposes penalties on those found to have violated the law.

As the trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, the National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”) seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. NSSF has a membership of more than 10,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, and sportsmen's organizations. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Maryland sportsmen, the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies throughout Maryland.

First and foremost, the National Shooting Sports Foundation supports the legal and responsible use of firearms. There are many minors who are taught the safe and responsible handling of firearms at a young age, and this bill would prevent them from using firearms or even having access to firearms without parental supervision. There are times when a minor would need access to firearms. SB 646 as drafted would prevent a minor’s ability to use a firearm for self-defense in an instance where his or her parent or guardian is not home. Additionally, 16- and 17-year olds are currently able to use firearms for hunting in Maryland without parental supervision. This bill would have a detrimental impact on passing on the great tradition of hunting.

It is for these reasons the National Shooting Sports Foundation opposes Senate Bill 646 and we would respectfully request an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

Trevor W. Santos

# **SHARPLESS\_UNF\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Sharpless, Bradford

Position: UNF

**DATE:** February 20, 2020  
**BILL NO.:** Senate Bill 646  
**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings  
**TITLE:** *Public Safety – Access to Firearms –Storage Requirements*  
**POSITION:** Oppose

Testimony from: Bradford V. Sharpless  
316 Townleigh Road  
Reisterstown, MD 21136  
[bvsharpless@hotmail.com](mailto:bvsharpless@hotmail.com)  
Registered Democrat, District 10

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SB 646 would eliminate the ability for individuals under the age of 18 years to engage in hunting activities without the direct supervision of an adult. This is unreasonable. Additionally, the bill prohibits storing any firearm, loaded or unloaded, in a location in which a minor COULD gain access to it. Practically speaking, a minor could potentially access any firearm regardless of the safe storage precautions taken by the firearm’s owner. This bill places all firearm owners in Maryland in legal jeopardy whenever they allow minors to enter into their homes. I request an “unfavorable” vote on SB 646.

# **Shawn Shupp\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Shopp, Shawn

Position: UNF

To our representatives concerning HB636/SB646, HB910/SB958, HB1257/SB816, HB958/SB910, HB591, HB1078, HB1501, HB1261.

You are our elected representatives and thus are duty bound to represent the wishes of your constituents.

We the people are **strongly opposed to ANY** additional regulations on law-abiding gun owners in MD. These laws will do nothing to prevent crime and will only further infringe on the rights of the good people that you are supposed to represent.

Not only will these ridiculous laws be completely ineffective against crime, but they will serve only to turn good law-abiding working tax payers into instant criminals.

Instead of making more laws like these we would all be better served if you actually made harsher penalties for the criminals who will always ignore such laws.

Shawn Shupp

[sps308@Reagan.com](mailto:sps308@Reagan.com)

12313 Forrest Hill Rd

Clear Spring MD 21722

**Richard W. Smith \_UNF\_ SB646**

Uploaded by: Smith, Richard

Position: UNF



I am a lifelong Maryland resident. My information is as follows:

Name: Richard W. Smith

Address: 1504 Miller Rd, Westminster, MD 21158

Email Address: [rwsmith7@comcast.net](mailto:rwsmith7@comcast.net)

I am writing you to express my opposition to a number of Gun-related Bills being presently proposed by the Maryland Legislature. These Bills will directly impact me personally as a Maryland Business Owner, Home Inspector, Head of Household/Father, Sportsman and Hunter, and as an American and Maryland citizen. Each of these Bills is an attack on my 2nd Amendment Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms that SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED. As representatives of the citizens of Maryland who have sworn an oath to protect the United States Constitution and the Maryland Constitution, you and all of the Delegates and Senators have a DUTY to defend the 2nd Amendment of the United States Constitution as required in the Maryland Constitution Article 2 that states that the Constitution of the United States "shall be the Supreme Law of the State". The Bills being proposed are in direct violation of Article 2 because each one of them is an infringement upon the citizens of Maryland as US citizens.

### **I OPPOSE the following: HB636/SB646 Public Safety - Access to Firearms - Storage Requirements**

These Bills are ambiguous in their wording. I agree with safe handling and storage of firearms at all times and I personally practice this every day. However, the language in this Bill regarding "could gain access" can be literally an unlimited number of scenarios including situations where a minor purposely breaks into locked storage units. The majority of law-abiding gun owners already practice strict gun safety and storage and this law will only put us in jeopardy of breaking the law due to ambiguous and poorly written language. This will make criminals out of law-abiding citizens.

**HB910/SB958 Criminal Law - Untraceable Firearms** These Bills will also instantly make thousands of citizens instant criminals. Citizens who have abided by Federal Law and ATF rules will suddenly become outlaws. The United States has allowed law-abiding citizens the ability to manufacture/complete firearms for personal use as part of the 2nd Amendment Right to keep and bear arms, unincriminated. These Bills will be in conflict with Maryland Constitution Article 2 that states that Constitution of the United States "shall be the Supreme Law of the State".

### **HB1257/SB816 Public Safety - Licensed Firearms Dealers (Firearms Dealers' Safety Act)**

These Bills will make it yet again much more difficult for me and others as law-abiding citizens of Maryland to lawfully obtain firearms. Not only will it cause some firearm dealers to potentially go out of business due to the high costs of this unnecessary burden, for those dealers that stay in business, it will translate into an unfair burden to those of us who lawfully purchase firearms as the price of the firearms we purchase in Maryland will undoubtedly increase due to this ridiculous requirement. Background checks both at the Federal and State levels and State-imposed "waiting periods" are already in place to prevent firearms from lawfully getting into the hands of criminals (as if criminals would even buy firearms through legal channels to begin with!). Enforce the laws already in place instead of creating new ones that make it harder for law-abiding citizens such as myself to exercise our Constitutional Rights. Criminals obtain firearms through illegal channels - so enforce the laws already in place and shut down those illegal channels!!

### **HB1078 Public Safety - Education - Firearm Funding (No Funding for Firearms Act)**

As a man married to a public school teacher and father to children who are in the public school systems of Maryland, I am deeply offended that MY Government would propose Legislation to make it ILLEGAL for teachers to (voluntarily) receive training by their employers that could potentially save her/his life and the lives of students and others at our public education institutions. I have stated this already: Criminals do not abide by the Law! Criminals will continue to knowingly target "gun free" areas such as schools, etc. because they know that they immediately hold the advantage and will meet minimal, if any, opposition or resistance to their evil plans. Instead of this ridiculous legislation, how about you do the opposite and not only allow public funding of

training for teachers but let our teachers (those who wish to do so) protect lives and train them properly in the safe use of firearms and level the playing field against criminals! Most criminals are cowards and they will likely not target places where they know good citizens are armed, trained, and ready to defend against them. Stop trying to pass legislation that makes it easier and easier for the criminals to target the law-abiding. You think that you are solving the problem when in reality, you are stacking the odds in favor of the criminal instead! Is that what you really want to accomplish? Think about that.

**HB591/HB1501 Public Safety – Lost or Stolen Regulated Firearm – Reporting** There are already laws in place requiring us to report lost or stolen firearms. Lawfully, regulated firearms can only be approved for purchase by law-abiding citizens. Once again, this is an example of legislation that penalizes the law-abiding instead of the criminals.

**HB1104 Public Safety - Regulated Firearms - Transfer** There are already laws in place requiring us to follow specific procedures when transferring ownership of regulated firearms. Once again, lawfully, regulated firearms can only be approved for purchase by law-abiding citizens. Therefore, this another example of legislation that penalizes the law-abiding instead of the criminals by making it increasingly more difficult for LAW-ABIDING citizens to be able buy/sell firearms.

**HB1261 Assault weapon copycat definition changes and registration** This Bill is an absolute atrocity. Not only will it keep myself and my family from being able to lawfully purchase and own sporting rifles of specific types and kinds in the future, this Bill also intends to unfairly tax me and my family with ridiculous fees for "registration". We have purchased EVERY SINGLE FIREARM 100% LEGALLY and we have submitted the proper paperwork to both the Federal and State Governments as required, yet the State of Maryland says that is not sufficient??? This Bill is another direct attack on the law-abiding citizens and is quite blatantly another attempt to disarm the public and to offensively trample on our GUARANTEED 2nd Amendment US Constitutional Right to keep and bear arms that SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED. Once again I remind each one of our PUBLICLY ELECTED representatives of your oath to uphold both the United States and the Maryland Constitutions. Furthermore, I remind you all again that this Bill will be in conflict with Maryland Constitution Article 2 that states that Constitution of the United States "shall be the Supreme Law of the State". If passed, this Bill will also instantly turn thousands of law-abiding gun owners in the State of Maryland into instant criminals. The United States Constitution specifically prohibits **ex post facto laws**.

As a lifelong resident of Maryland I have watched with great shame and utter disappointment at our Legislature's ugly track record with previous gun "control" legislation and I continue to be disgusted that our elected officials ignore the GUARANTEED RIGHTS of Marylanders as UNITED STATES CITIZENS. Maryland residents are already one of the most infringed group of United States citizens when it comes to Gun Rights. You claim you are making Maryland safer, yet you have absolutely no proof that we are any safer. In fact the exact opposite is true! Baltimore is one of the highest crime centers in the entire country!!! You are bound by oath and you have a public duty to serve us and defend the Constitutions of Maryland and the USA. These ever-important documents are what make us FREE men and women, and these proposed Bills will directly erode that Liberty. The Bill of Rights is not the "Bill of Wants" or the "Bill of Needs" - it is a guarantee of the essential Rights that we have as citizens of this Country. EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THESE RIGHTS is just as important as the others. Just as you would not consider legislation that would erode the Freedom of Speech, or the Freedom of Religion, or the Freedom of Assembly, or the Freedom of the Press, you should NOT consider legislation that will erode the Right to Bear Arms!

I am praying for all of you daily that you make sound decisions that are congruent with the Constitutions that you SWORE TO UPHOLD. May God be with you and guide you.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Smith

## **Garrett Stefan\_Unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Stefan, Garret

Position: UNF

**RE: OPPOSE all new gun control bills and HB 1261**

Dear elected official and staff:

I stand with the Firearms Policy Coalition and other pro-rights groups in OPPOSITION to HB 1261 and the dozens of other gun control bills introduced this session.

These new proposals will only crack down on those wishing to defend themselves with commonly owned guns--it will not make a difference to the criminal element. MD already has some of the strongest gun control laws in the nation.

These new proposed measures are untenable, especially because we all know criminals are not going to follow them at all. We know this because after the last big gun control laws in Maryland passed it had no significant impact on gun crime; in fact it, increased and hasn't come down.

It's time representatives in Annapolis finally stand up and defend the entire Bill of Rights and stop catering to anti-rights extremists like Michael Bloomberg.

Please make a stand and OPPOSE HB 1261, as well as the dozens of other proposed gun control bills.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Garrett Stefan  
[garrettstefan@gmail.com](mailto:garrettstefan@gmail.com)

2818 Harford Rd.  
Fallston, MD 21047  
Constituent

# **Steven Steinbacher\_unf\_sb646**

Uploaded by: Steinbacher, Steven

Position: UNF

Hello Delegate Arian,

My name is Steven Steinbacher.

My address is 1900 Huntfield Ct, Fallston, MD 21047

I have written to you and your colleagues before and will continue to do so.

I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to all gun related bills being pushed by the Maryland General Assembly.

I OPPOSE:

HB636/SB646

SB816/HB1257

HB910/SB958

HB1078

HB958/SB910

HB591

HB1104

HB1501

HB1261

All of these are restrictions on my natural rights. As a tax paying, law-abiding citizen, I have had enough of the political class and their attacks on my rights and the rights/freedoms of my friends and family.

The gun bans initiated in 2013 have done nothing for Marylanders to make them safer, but they have made it harder for law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, their families, and their property. The general assembly should focus on the laws already on the books and the crime in Baltimore city that will not be affected by any of these bills. Criminal prosecution reform should be on the docket, not my right to peacefully own property.

Sincerely,

Steven Steinbacher

## **WilliamUphoff\_unf\_SB646**

Uploaded by: Uphoff, William

Position: UNF

**OPPOSED to:**  
**HB636(sb646)**  
**hb910(sb958)**  
**hb1257(sb816)**  
**hb958(sb910)**  
**HB591**  
**HB1104**  
**hb1261**  
**sb646(hb636)**  
**sb816(hb1257)**  
**hb1078 hb1501**

William Uphoff  
823 Judy lane Pikesville  
[cubhillconst@aol.com](mailto:cubhillconst@aol.com)

Do any of these bills take the words a GOOD AND SUBSTANTIAL REASON out of the ccw for Maryland? probably not so instead of going after the real problem CRIMINALS you are making it harder and more expensive for law-abiding citizen to own a fire arm for protection against the people that don't follow the law anyway so these bills HB636(sb646) hb910(sb958)hb1257(sb816)hb958(sb910)HB591 HB1104 hb1261 sb646(hb636)sb816(hb1257)hb1078 hb1501 are not a good idea in my opinion . These bills do not allow myself and any law-abiding citizen to have in my home and be able to carry for self-protection and to be able to protect my family



**NRA\_UNF\_SB 646**

Uploaded by: WEBER, DAVID

Position: UNF

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

**INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



**NRA**

February 20, 2020

Senate Bill 646: Opposed

Dear, Chairman Smith & Members of the Committee,

Gun storage laws don't work; firearm safety education does.

While we recognize that every accident or illegal use of a firearm by a minor is tragic, it important to keep things in perspective. Voluntary education programs, such as the NRA's EddieEagle GunSafe program, work. Under the current version of Maryland Code, Criminal Law, § 4-104, a person may not store or leave a loaded firearm in a location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised child would gain access to the firearm. With current law, SB646 would be unnecessary at best. Maryland Code, Criminal Law, § 3-204 provides, a person may not recklessly engage in conduct that creates a substantial risk of death or serious physical injury to another. The penalty for such conduct is a misdemeanor that carries up to five years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both. It is important to note that while voluntarily choosing to lock firearms should certainly be among the safe storage options parents consider, efforts by the state to mandate such a practice are dangerous and ineffective.

According to analysis by Dr. John R. Lott Jr. and as published in his book *The Bias Against Guns: Safe storage laws have no impact on accidental gun deaths*. The impact of safe storage laws is consistent with existing research indicating that the guns most likely to be used in accidental shootings are owned by the least law-abiding citizens and thus are the guns least likely to be locked up after passage of the law. The safe storage laws thus increase crime yet fail to produce any significant change in accidental deaths or suicides.

In Merced California, an intruder stabbed three children to death with a pitchfork. The oldest child had been trained by her father in firearms use but could not save her siblings from the attacker because the gun was locked away to comply with the state's "safe storage" law. SB646 would change § 4-104 by removing the certificate of firearm and hunter safety exception to the application of the statute. Meaning that even a responsible minor who has acquired such a certificate could no longer have access to firearm without adult supervision in Maryland, allowing responsible minors to be in harm's way.

Teaching children what to do if they find a gun is no different than teaching a child

that ovens should always be considered hot, that matches and lighters are not to be played with, or that they should not talk to strangers. Most of us do not make a habit of keeping strangers in our homes, yet no one would debate the importance of educating our children about potential predators. SB646 would change § 4-104 by substituting the term “minor” for “child” throughout the section. This has the effect of applying the firearm storage requirement to situations involving anyone under the age of 18. So why should we not teach our children the importance of firearms safety and then trust our children.

"STOP! Don't Touch! Leave the area! Tell an adult!" These simple commands have been taught to over 24 million children via the Eddie Eagle GunSafe® Program. When children are taught what to do if they find a gun, accidents are much less likely to happen. Gun storage laws don't work; firearm safety education does. Mandating unenforceable firearm storage simply does not work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Weber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David Weber  
Maryland State Director  
NRA-ILA