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**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.