



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ mota-members.com

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 858 – Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)

Date: February 21, 2023

Position: Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *Senate Bill 858 – Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)*. This bill will help reduce youth suicide and other firearm deaths by ensuring that firearms are stored in a way that is inaccessible to children.

In our work in schools, we have seen an increase in the number of children impacted directly by gun violence. We believe the combined strategy of increasing access to behavioral health services and decreasing access to firearms is essential in addressing rising rates of youth suicide and school shootings.

We know that 82% of youth under the age of 18 who attempted suicide by gun used a firearm belonging to a family member, usually a parent.¹ This legislation is urgently needed to save the lives of our students. We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

¹ <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/youth-access/#:~:text=Source%20of%20Firearms%20in%20Youth%20Suicides&text=An%20NVISS%20study%20of%20firearm,family%20member%2C%20usually%20a%20parent.>