



Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc.

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Honorable Members of the
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Md. 21401

**Subject: HB-0618 Sales and Use Tax - Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices
SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Delegates:

I represent the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (WCFSC) which is comprised of eighteen hunting clubs and sportsmen's associations with nearly six thousand individual members in Washington County. As President of the Federation, I work together with the leadership of a much wider Coalition of Western Maryland Sportsmen's Clubs for the benefit of not only Washington County Sportsmen, but also for the five most western counties of Maryland.

I, as a private citizen of this state and as the representative of the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc. **strongly urge you to support HB-0618, Titled: Sales and Use Tax - Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices.**

Over the past decade, and more and more increasingly, there has been legislation passed that requires handguns and regulated firearms to be safely stored out the reach of children. This year HB-0636 and SB-0646 strives to redefine the regulation of not only what must be "safely stored" (to include **all firearms**, including sporting rifles and shotguns from children) but now increase the age up to any age below 18 (Minors). Failure to do so can result in fine and imprisonment.

Currently both House Bill 0636 and Senate Bill 0646 state ***"FOR the purpose of altering a certain prohibition to prohibit a person from storing or leaving a loaded or unloaded firearm in a location where a minor could gain access to the firearm . . . "***

It should be noted that a regular hunting license is available to anyone age 16 and over, provided certain hunter education certificates are earned, and that junior hunting licenses for those under the age 16 are also available with parental written permission.

So since both HB-0636 and SB-0646 seek to require that all firearms be stored in a manner that a minor (even one that is a licensed hunter) cannot gain access (they do not mention that trigger locks are acceptable) these bills strongly imply that a lock box or safe of some type is necessary to prohibit access to the firearm to someone under 18 years old.

It is our position, that if the government *intends to require* all gun owners to store all firearms in such a manner, the expense of such devices that meet the intentions of the law should not only be tax free, but perhaps also tax deductible.

Again, I strongly urge you to support HB-0618.

Respectfully,

Joe Winter

Joe Winter
President, WCFSC

"Sportsmen & Conservationists, working together..."