



Testimony in Support of HB 200: Jaelynn's Law

TO: Chair and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Linda J McKibben MD DrPH FAAP FACPM, CEO, The McKibben Group LLC

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As a Maryland citizen since 2009, a licensed pediatrician and a preventive-medicine physician, a member of the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and former Medical Officer for the CDC National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, I unreservedly support Jaelynn's Bill to prevent access to lethal firearms by children and youth by fairly and scientifically criminalizing unsafe gun storage. AAP policy (2012) supports strengthening regulations to prevent firearm deaths and injuries; peer-reviewed research demonstrates the efficacy of more stringent state Child Access Prevention (CAP) laws.

During the 2020 Maryland General Assembly session, I provided in-person, oral and written testimony in support of Jaelynn's Law on behalf of Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence and the AAP Maryland Chapter. For 2021, I am representing The McKibben Group LLC, an organization which provides technical assistance and project direction services for other organizations. Last summer, I directed a project to develop new pediatric tools, an patient educational brochure that includes information about Maryland's CAP law and accompanying training on the use of evidence-based "Motivational Interviewing" with the Brochure for all parents and caregivers. The Pediatric Child Access Prevention Project brochure is attached.

My personal vision is that CAP laws do not make pediatricians irrelevant; rather, we all must contribute and collaborate to overcome the political and social determinants of pediatric firearm injuries and deaths, especially the disparate harm done to communities of color and disadvantaged persons during the current pandemic. Gun sales, virtual classrooms, severe financial distress, and domestic violence are known factors that have exacerbated the toll for children and families. I personally believe such factors contribute in undocumented ways to the unequal access of anti-COVID vaccinations to people of color. Vaccine hesitancy is over-rated, compared to day-to-day survival during a global crisis.

I am grateful to all of you for working unselfishly, putting your own lives at risk, to improve the lives of children, families and all communities in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Linda J McKibben MD DrPH

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