

Good afternoon. Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher and members of the committee, my name is Melissa Ladd. I live in Olney, in District 19.

I am here in support of SB 676 and I ask for a favorable report out of committee.

- Firearms are the leading cause of death for America's children and teens.
- More than half of current gun owners do not store their firearms securely.<sup>1</sup>
- 4.6 million children live in a home with an unsecured firearm<sup>2</sup>
- 80% of school shooters get the gun from their home or the home of a friend or family member<sup>3</sup>

Studies show that households that locked both firearms and ammunition were associated with a 78% lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and an 85 percent lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens, compared to those that locked neither. Another study estimated that if half of households with children that have at least one unlocked gun switched to locking all their guns, one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented.

**Secure storage prevents shootings by disrupting unauthorized access to firearms. The bottom line is that it is adults' responsibility to secure guns to keep children from accessing them. We need to do more in Maryland to ensure that adults do all they can to keep guns out of the hands of children.**

**Next week on Sunday March 20th, it will have been four years since Jaelynn died after being shot at her school. In honor of her, it's time to pass Jaelynn's law.**

Thank you for your time.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hub.jhu.edu/2018/02/22/more-than-half-gun-owners-do-not-safely-store-their-guns/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2789269>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5209a1.htm>