



Committee: House Judiciary Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 659

Title: Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)

Hearing Date: February 23, 2022

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *House Bill 659 – Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)*.

This bill is needed to help address youth suicide in the state. According to state data, 16.2% of high school students reported they had planned how they would attempt suicide in the past 12 months.ⁱ Firearms are the most common method of suicide, and a suicide attempt with a firearm is more likely to be fatal than attempts involving other methods.ⁱⁱ Because 48% of suicides involve less than 10 minutes of deliberation, it is imperative that children do not have unsupervised access to lethal firearms.ⁱⁱⁱ

We also think it is essential that this bill includes a requirement that MDH develop a youth suicide prevention guide for youth service providers. The vast majority of firearm owners want to be responsible with their firearms, but they may not fully understand the importance of storing their firearms in a way that is inaccessible to older children. It is vital that providers have the resources they need to discuss the importance of firearm storage with families.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.

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<https://health.maryland.gov/bha/suicideprevention/Documents/2020%20Maryland%20State%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Plan.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/M13-1301>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/duration/>