
BILL NO: House Bill 307
TITLE: Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law)
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 15, 2023
POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

House Bill 307 would require the safe storage of firearms away from both children and prohibited persons. The Women's Law Center (WLC) supports House Bill 307 because increasing protections from inappropriate people having access to firearms is good public policy.

House Bill 307 is a common sense update to existing law regarding storage of firearms. It seeks to add protections so that minors, people experiencing suicidal thoughts or "prohibited persons" as defined cannot easily obtain access to firearms. We refer the Committee to the Maryland Network Against Violence's testimony for statistics regarding the use of firearms in domestic violence fatalities. Owners of firearms should always keep their firearms safely locked, separate from ammunition, and not accessible to people who should not have access to them.

We suggest that the definition of "prohibited person" in HB 307 should be amended to specifically include those persons identified in Md. Family Law Code Ann. to § 4-506, rather than relying on a catch-all provision.

Therefore, the Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. strongly urges a favorable report on House Bill 307 with amendments.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, membership organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change.