Committee: **House Judiciary Committee**

Bill: **House Bill 307 – Jaelynn's Law**

Hearing Date: **February 15, 2023**

Position: **Support**

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *House Bill 659 – Firearm Safety - Storage Requirements and Youth Suicide Prevention (Jaelynn's Law).* This bill will help reduce youth suicide and other firearm deaths by ensuring that firearms are stored in a way that is inaccessible to children.

Access to firearms is a significant risk factor for adolescent suicides.[i] Nationally, between 2015 and 2016, a firearm has been involved in 40% of the over 2,000 annual youth suicides.[ii] Extensive evidence shows that access to firearms increases the likelihood of death by suicide among youth:

- When a home contains unlocked guns the odds of a child or adolescent dying by firearm suicide is more than **twice** as high as in households where guns are locked.[iii]

- The risk of suicide by gun is more than **twice** as high in households with loaded guns, as compared to households with unloaded guns.[iv]

This legislation takes a commonsense approach by codifying best practice for safe firearm storage for adults around youth.   We can save lives of our most vulnerable youth with this legislation. We ask for a favorable report on this legislation.   If we can provide additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

i https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/risk/#:~:text=Twelve%20or%20more%20U.S.%20case,live%20in%20homes%20with%20guns.&text=Firearm%20access%20was%20a%20risk,for%20both%20males%20and%20females.

ii https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2019-01-17/youth-suicide-rates-higher-in-states-with-more-gun-ownership

iii https://www.srcd.org/research/access-firearms-increases-child-and-adolescent-suicide

iv https://www.srcd.org/research/access-firearms-increases-child-and-adolescent-suicide