

Please find **UNFAVORABLE** Senate Bill 1031  
Criminal Law – Child's Access to Firearms – Penalty (Ny'Kala Strawder Act)

I oppose this bill as it imposes harsh criminal penalties on gun owners yet we do not see the same treatment for other potentially deadly household items. Consider the following:

**Prescription Drugs:** The opioid crisis has led to many deaths due to minors accessing prescription medications, yet there are no harsh legal penalties for failing to lock up a pill bottle. [1]

**Car Keys:** A teenager taking a parent's car without permission can lead to catastrophic consequences, yet parents are not criminally liable for simply leaving keys in an accessible area.

**Knives and Household Chemicals:** These objects can be just as dangerous in the hands of a minor, but no laws impose imprisonment for failing to lock up the kitchen steak knives.

Why, then, is law-abiding gun ownership uniquely criminalized? This bill operates on the false assumption that guns, more than any other object, are inherently evil—when in reality, they are tools that millions of responsible Americans use for self-defense, sport, and hunting.

Under certain circumstances, a minor may need access to a firearm to defend themselves or their family. If an armed home invasion occurs and a minor must use a lawfully owned firearm to protect their siblings, should the parents be imprisoned for allowing access? This bill does not provide a reasonable self-defense exception, which may lead to tragic and unintended consequences. You think this never happens? Well, [2] is a news article from 2/15/2025 where a juvenile defended themselves against not one but 2 armed intruders.

The bill's wording "knew or should have known" is dangerously vague. It places a burden of clairvoyance on gun owners, forcing them to predict what a minor may or may not do. Responsible gun owners already follow safe storage practices, and accidental cases should be addressed through education, not imprisonment that exceeds willful acts of malice.

While the safety of minors is a shared priority, SB 1031 is certainly not the solution. It targets responsible gun owners while pretending that equally dangerous household risks simply don't exist. Don't criminalize parents.



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[1] <https://ncfrp.org/center-resources/quick-looks/opioid-related-deaths-in-children-ages-1-to-17/>

[2] [https://www.kake.com/news/kentucky-child-fatally-shoots-two-home-intruders-in-self-defense-police-say/article\\_c57efa84-ed80-11ef-a03b-a345cd710577.html](https://www.kake.com/news/kentucky-child-fatally-shoots-two-home-intruders-in-self-defense-police-say/article_c57efa84-ed80-11ef-a03b-a345cd710577.html)