



2A Maryland

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**House Bill 1123
Criminal Law - Minor's Access to Firearms - Penalty
UNFAVORABLE**

Historically, the Maryland General Assembly has taken the position that higher penalties do not equate to increased levels of compliance with the law.

The consistent failure of the Maryland General Assembly to classify the theft of a firearm from a simple misdemeanor theft of property offense to a felony is a clear example of this mindset.

House Bill 1123 would impose a prison sentence of up to 5 years for storing a firearm in a location where the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised minor has access to the firearm. There is no provision that the minor must first gain actual access to the firearm or that a minor even be present at any time.

The proposed penalty is disproportional to the offense and will not promote public safety.

We recommend an unfavorable report on House Bill 1123.

Respectfully,

John H. Josselyn
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