

Colorado Senate Judiciary Committee regarding HB21-1106, "Safe Storage"

Testimony by Keith Emerson, April 1, 2021

My name is Keith Emerson and I am here to speak against this bill. My belief is that safe storage of firearms is something to be encouraged and not something to be legislated and penalties applied after any problem. Today though my remarks will be regarding this bill as an impediment to self-defense.

I'd like to start off my testimony by saying please don't conflate issues. During the Senate testimony someone said that they had a brother gunned down by a gang member, implying that therefor we need this "safe storage" bill.

There are a number of rather cynical Catch 22s built into this bill. One is that you have to keep firearms out of reach of a young person yet in certain cases they have to be accessible by that same youth. Then there's my favorite of spending a good part of the bill outlining requirements for an educational program and then not funding it for at least 3 years if ever.

A third and rather large question is whether the rather tortured work-around to try and have this bill pass the test in Heller is adequate. To try and get around the Heller decision this bill says you can have an unlocked gun as long as it's on your person or close enough to be accessed as if it was on your person, whatever that means. So if you get up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom and the firearm is in your end table you are likely going to be in violation of the law.

Let's talk District of Columbia Et All v Heller. Some would have you believe this is the salient quote from the decision: "Nor, correspondingly, does our analysis suggest the invalidity of laws regulating the storage of firearms to prevent accidents." This quote turns out to be about 2/3 of the way down the decision in arguments against the Justice Breyer dissent and the "accidents" being talked about are colonial era laws regulating gunpowder storage against fires, which they found to be not relevant to the issue of self-defense with a firearm. Look it up for yourself.

The real quoted is up front in the court's decision that, "3. The handgun ban and the trigger-lock requirement (as applied to self-defense) violate the Second Amendment.....Similarly, the requirement that any lawful firearm in the home be disassembled or bound by a trigger lock

makes it impossible for citizens to use arms for the core lawful purpose of self-defense and is hence unconstitutional.”

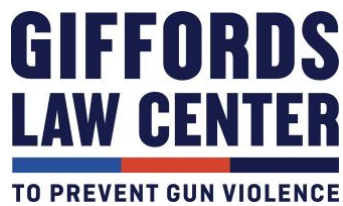
Is the proposed work-around to let you carry on your person or nearby in your home adequate? The court’s decision talks about “any lawful firearm in the home”. That’s pretty clear to me. My personal opinion is that you should talk to an independent lawyer to make sure you are constitutionally in the clear now rather than wasting the State of Colorado’s money in multi-year court battles. So that’s Heller and I hope you’ll raise your eyebrows if anyone tries to justify this bill based on the discredited gunpowder question.

Beyond Heller I’d like to point out two things. First, not everyone can call on the state patrol to guard their home overnight as I understand they are doing for a member of the Colorado House. Most of us are on our own. Second, as an old saying goes, when seconds count police are only minutes away. According to the Denver Post timeline in downtown Boulder the response time was at least 7 minutes. One moral of this story is that your own defense is up to you in those first 7 plus minutes.

During Senate Judiciary Committee testimony on this bill a member of the committee held up a combination cable lock and said that “getting this off a firearm should take hardly any time.” If anyone wants to do that here I’d like you to randomize the combination, then after talking to someone for a while to get the combination out of the forefront of your mind, close your eyes and picture yourself in the middle of the night woken up from a sound sleep, possibly with someone even in your bedroom. Keep your eyes closed, the room is dark after all, and have someone time you figuring out the combination and unthreading the cable through a bent tube. Then add more seconds for finding the firearm’s magazine, putting it in the gun and racking the slide, or, if you prefer, loading cartridges into a revolver. Add some more time in to call 911 before you start looking for your firearm and a few moments after to pick up a flashlight. That’s what real people face.

Safe storage should be voluntary and people educated, not another stick like this one to further beat parents who are probably already traumatized.

Thank you.



**Testimony of Allison Anderman
Senior Counsel
Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence**

**In Support of H.B. 1106
Before the Colorado Senate Judiciary Committee**

Thursday, April 1, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 1106 on behalf of Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, the gun violence prevention organization led by former Congresswoman and survivor, Gabby Giffords. H.B. 1106 would significantly strengthen Colorado's efforts to keep guns out of the hands of minors and people who are prohibited by law from possessing firearms.

BACKGROUND

Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia currently have laws aimed at keeping guns out of the hands of minors, and of those, four states also have laws requiring the safe storage of guns to prevent access by prohibited people.ⁱ While Colorado takes some steps to prevent gun access by minors, its law is significantly weaker than most other states with child access prevention laws.

Currently, Colorado only prohibits an adult from intentionally, recklessly, or knowingly providing a handgun to a person under 18 years of ageⁱⁱ whereas 17 states and DC prohibit an adult from negligently allowing a minor access to a handgun or all firearms. Five of those states impose criminal liability when a minor is *likely* to get ahold of a firearm, even if the minor never accesses or uses the firearm.

H.B. 1106 would bring Colorado in line with states with strong access prevention laws by making an adult criminally liable if he or she fails to secure a firearm and knows or reasonably should know that a minor, or prohibited person, is likely to access the firearm. The bill also facilitates implementation of this law by requiring the state to undertake an educational campaign about the law, and requiring dealers to provide a locking device with each firearm sold or transferred. Federal law also requires dealers to provide a locking device when handguns are sold.ⁱⁱⁱ

THE DATA

Improperly secured guns in homes pose a clear risk, and too often result in tragic shootings, including unintentional discharges and suicides, that are all too common in America today. The best estimate is that **4.6 million minors in the US live in homes with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm.**^{iv} And while many gun owners believe that their children do not know where their guns are stored, this is often a false sense of security. More than a third of parents wrongly believe their children do not know where a gun is stored, according to researchers who asked both parents and their children about guns in the home.^v

Minors who live in homes with improperly secured firearms are substantially more likely to die by suicide. Guns are used in less than 1% of minors' suicide attempts, but account for over 40% of minors' [suicide deaths](#). Unsupervised gun access is therefore a major factor driving our nation's intolerably high rates of youth suicide: **suicide is the second leading cause of death among children aged 10–14 and among young people aged 15–24.**^{vi} In states where minors are more likely to use guns in suicides, minors are also much more likely to die by suicide. Laws that make it harder for minors to access unsecured guns and ammunition help to prevent these tragedies.

Unsecured guns are also a major source of weapons used in school shootings. The Wall Street Journal found that a gun from the home was used in 17 of 20 [school shootings](#) involving at least three victims since 1990. Preventing underage gun access can often prevent these horrific events. According to the [National Institute of Mental Health](#), the human brain doesn't finish developing and maturing until the mid- to late-20s. The part of the brain that is responsible for planning, prioritizing and controlling impulses, is one of the last brain regions to mature. For this reason, teenagers should not have unsupervised access to guns.

Estimates suggest that modest increases in the number of American homes safely storing firearms could prevent almost a third of youth gun deaths due to suicide and unintentional firearm injury.^{vii} **Numerous studies over the past 20 years have found that child access prevention laws can reduce suicide and unintentional gun deaths and injuries among children and teens by up to 54%.**^{viii}

In addition to preventing access to guns by unsupervised minors, this bill will also ensure that people who are prohibited by law from possessing guns, such as individuals who have committed domestic abuse, not have easy access to them. **Domestic violence victims are five times more likely to be killed when their abuser has access to a gun.**^{ix}

CONCLUSION

H.B. 1106 will help fill important gaps in Colorado's gun laws, ensuring that minors and people prohibited by law from gun possession do not have easy access to firearms. Accordingly, I urge you to vote to pass H.B. 1106 out of committee.

ⁱ Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Child Access Prevention, <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/child-consumer-safety/child-access-prevention/>; Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Safe Storage, <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/child-consumer-safety/safe-storage/>.

ⁱⁱ Colo. Rev. Stat. § 18-12-108.7(1), (2).

ⁱⁱⁱ 18 U.S.C. § 922(z)(1).

^{iv} Deborah Azrael, Joanna Cohen, Carmel Salhi, and Matthew Miller, “Firearm Storage in Gun-owning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey,” *Journal of Urban Health* 95, no. 3 (2018): 295–304.

^v Frances Baxley and Matthew Miller, “Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms,” *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 160(5): 542-47 (2006): 542-47.

^{vi} Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, “Association Between Youth Focused Firearm Laws & Youth Suicides,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 292, no. 5 (2004): 594–601.

^{vii} Michael C. Monuteaux, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, “Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage with Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among US Youths,” *JAMA Pediatrics* (2019).

^{viii} Emma C. Hamilton, et al., “Variability of Child Access Prevention Laws and Pediatric Firearm Injuries,” *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* 84, no. 4 (2018): 613–619. See also, Peter Cummings, David C. Grossman, Frederick P. Rivara, and Thomas D. Koepsell, “State Gun Safe Storage Laws and Child Mortality Due to Firearms,” *JAMA* 278, no. 13 (1997): 1084–1086; Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, “Association Between Youth-focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides,” *JAMA* 292, no. 5 (2004): 594–601; Jeffrey DeSimone, Sara Markowitz, and Jing Xu, “Child Access Prevention Laws and Nonfatal Gun Injuries,” *Southern Economic Journal* 80, no. 1 (2013): 5–25.

^{ix} JC Campbell, et al., “Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multisite Case Control Study,” *American Journal of Public Health* 93, no.7 (2003): 1089–1097.



Fatal and Nonfatal Firearm Injuries Compared to Automobile Injuries in Colorado Children

Carl Armon, PhD; Jessica Cataldi, MD; Edwin Asturias, MD; Cameron Todd; James Todd, MD



Summary

From 2014 to 2019, firearm injuries and deaths have increased in Colorado children (0-19 years of age), averaging almost one injury every day and one fatality every week while, concurrently, automobile injuries are consistently decreasing. Firearm injuries in children represent a public health problem that occurs in both rural and urban areas, affects all races and peaks during the summer months. Since 1999, the childhood mortality rate attributed to automobile injury in Colorado has consistently decreased while it is currently increasing for firearm injury and especially for suicide. For the first time, the mortality rate for childhood firearm injury in Colorado children exceeds that for automobile injury. The fatality rate for firearm injury in Colorado children is 18 times greater than for automobile injury. Similar to public health policies that have reduced automobile injuries and fatalities, many firearm injuries and deaths in Colorado children can be prevented by increasing risk awareness and firearm safety best practices that limit access to unsecured weapons and ammunition.

Methods: The numbers of firearm and automobile injuries during 2014-2019 in Colorado children were estimated using the Colorado Hospital Association inpatient and emergency department databases.¹ The Colorado Department of Local Affairs website provided population estimates by age, gender, and race/ethnicity by Colorado County for 2014-2019. Firearm injury patients were identified by the presence of external cause of injury E-codes for 2014 through September 2015, and equivalent ICD-10 codes for the last quarter of 2015 as well as 2016-2019 (see Appendix for more details). To adjust for possible double counting caused by transfers related to the same injury, cases with proximate dates of visit, and the same birth year, birth month, gender and ZIP code were consolidated into a single record. Because the majority of firearm fatalities are not accounted for in emergency department or hospital records, we independently estimated overall fatalities due to firearm injury using the CDC Wonder database from 1999 to 2019.²

Results

Table 1 shows the aggregated number of firearm injuries (ED and hospital) and fatalities for Colorado children (ages 0-19 years) for the 6-year period from 2014 to 2019. Firearm injuries in children averaged one every 1.3 days with one fatality every week. Unintentional firearm injuries were by far the most common, accounting for 54% of all firearm injuries in children. 43% of these unintentional firearm injuries occurred in children 0-14 years of age. Firearm injury occurred in children of all race/ethnicities (White, 48.7%; Hispanic, 14.2%; Black, 13.1%) and in both urban and rural Regional Accountable Entities (RAEs). Overall, 86% of non-fatal firearm injuries occurred among male children.

Table 1: Case count of firearm injury and death in Colorado children 0-19 years, 2014-2019.

Injury Intent	Non-fatal Injury	Fatal Injury*	Total Injuries	Average Cases per Month
Unintentional	912	*	(912)	(12.7)
Suicide	40	218	258	3.6
Assault	335	129	464	6.4
Undetermined	58	*	(58)	(0.8)
Total	1,345	366	1,711	23.8

* CDC Wonder Database reporting restrictions prohibit publishing individual category case counts < 10
() Minimum estimate

Non-fatal firearm and automobile injuries:

Figure 1 shows that the monthly number of non-fatal firearm injuries in children 0-19 years significantly increased from 2014-2019 for both assaults and unintentional injuries with unintentional injuries predominating (other categories not shown due to reporting restrictions required by data source). Dramatic peaks of firearm injury occurred each summer, presumably because children are home alone with unsupervised access to loaded firearms.

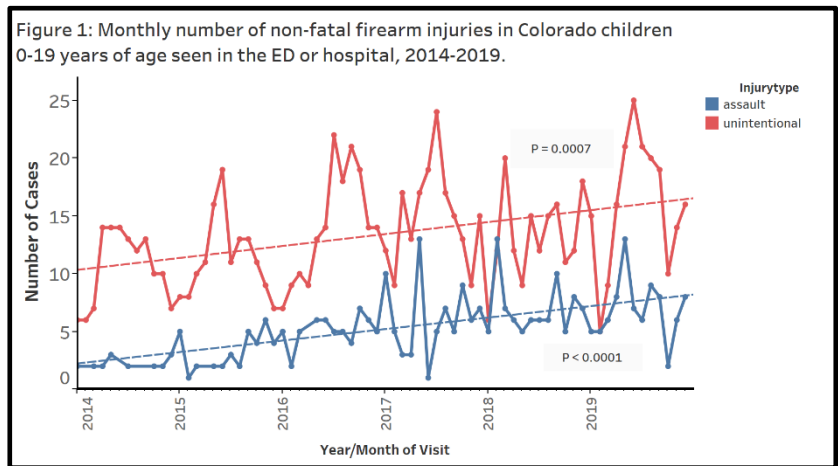


Figure 2 demonstrates that significant increases ($P < 0.05$) in the annual number of nonfatal firearm injuries in children 0-19 years of age were seen in six of the seven Colorado Regional Accountable Entities (except RAE 4) from 2014-2019.

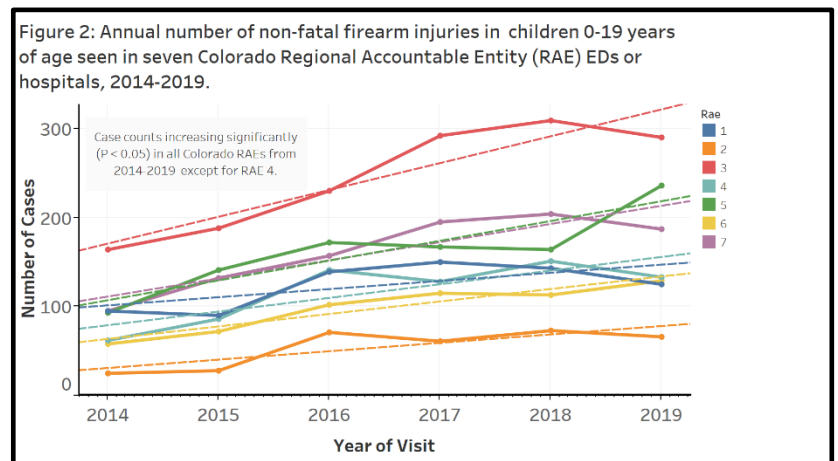
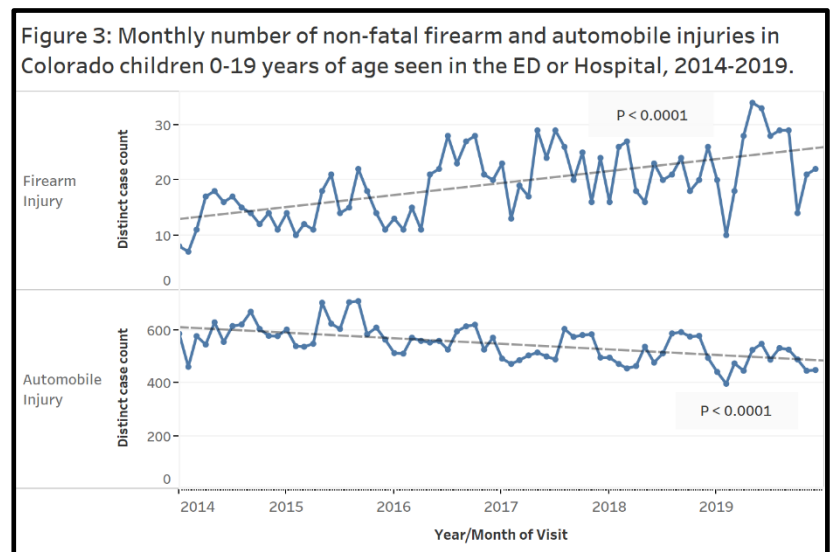


Figure 3 documents that the monthly number of nonfatal firearm injuries significantly increased in Colorado children 0-19 years of age from 2014-2019 while, during the same time period, nonfatal automobile injuries significantly decreased.

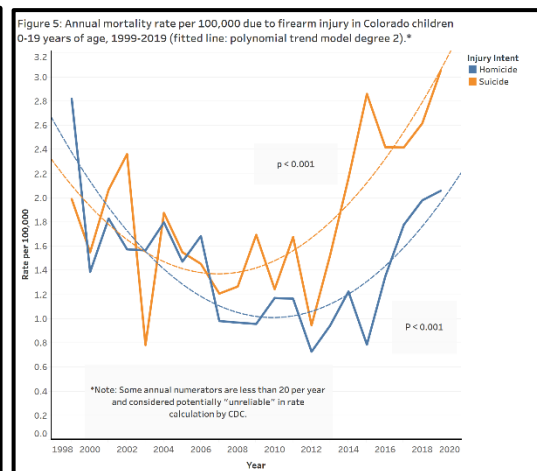
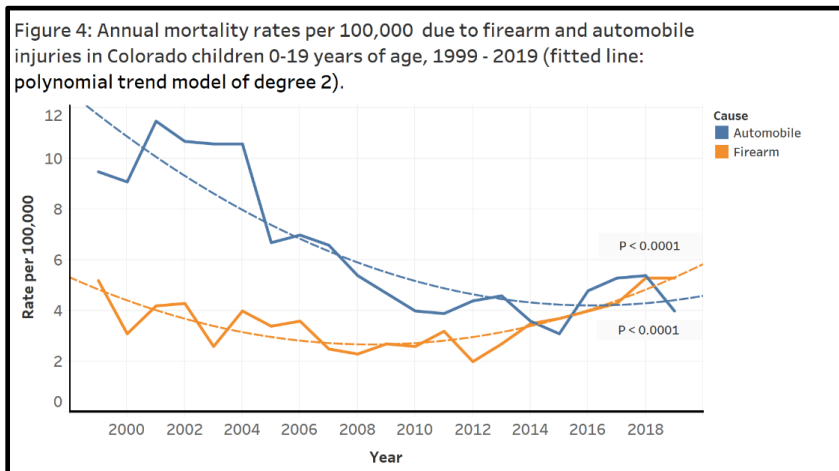


Firearm and Automobile Fatalities:

Not all firearm and/or automobile fatalities are seen in an ED or hospital, so they are not accurately reflected in the CHA databases. Using the CDC Wonder national death certificate database, we identified 366 Colorado children who died due to firearm injury between 2014 and 2019 (Table 2), the majority (62.8%) by suicide. Similar to non-fatal firearm injuries, deaths due to firearm injury also increased significantly ($P = 0.003$) from 2014 to 2019 while a similar total number of childhood automobile-related deaths (368) did not increase from 2014 to 2019 ($P = 0.272$) (Table 2). Overall, the fatality rate for firearm injury was 18 times higher than for automobile injury (21.4% versus 1.2%; $P < 0.0001$, Chi Square). Expanding the analysis to 1999 through 2019, Figure 4 clearly shows a consistent decrease in childhood mortality rate in Colorado children due to automobile injury with a recent upswing in mortality due to firearm injury – for the first time exceeding the automobile mortality rate, while Figure 5 shows the dramatic increase in firearm deaths due to suicide in Colorado children since 2012.

Table 2: Total case count and fatality rates of firearm injuries as compared to auto injuries in Colorado children 0-19 years, 2014-2019.

Injury Type	Non-fatal Injury	Fatal Injury	Total Injuries	Fatality Rate
Firearm	1,345	366	1,711	21.4%
Automobile	29,846	368	30,214	1.2%



Comment:

Firearm injuries and deaths are common and increasing in Colorado children (0-19 years of age), occurring, on average, almost once every day with deaths, on average, once every week. They reflect an increasing public health crisis that occurs in both rural and urban areas and affects all races and ethnicities. The great majority of non-fatal injuries are unintentional while the majority of firearm fatalities are due to suicides that are increasing at an alarming rate.

Beginning decades back, efforts to improve automobile safety for children have resulted in significant decreases in automobile accident-related injury and death.³⁻⁶ Contrary to the misperception that “firearms in the home keep families safe”, firearm injury and death in minors is an increasing public health crisis in Colorado that requires similar safety-focused approaches.⁷⁻¹³ The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended policy measures and effective strategies to limit children’s access to firearms and improve firearm safety.¹⁴ A recent policy brief from Colorado’s Eugene S. Farley, Jr. Health Policy Center documents how such measures could successfully address this significant and increasing risk on behalf of Colorado’s children.¹⁵

REFERENCES

1. Armon C, Todd J. Firearm Injuries in Colorado Children, 2014 - 2015. *State of the Health of Colorado's Children*. 2017;XIII:1-5. Available at: <https://www.childrenscolorado.org/globalassets/healthcare-professionals/firearm-injury-2017-final.pdf>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2019 on CDC WONDER Online Database. Available at: <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>. Accessed April 7, 2020 PM
3. Hodges NL, Smith GA. Car safety. *Pediatrics in review*. 2014;35(4):155-60
4. Durbin DR. Child passenger safety. *Pediatrics*. 2011;127(4):788-793. Available at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2011/03/21/peds.2011-0213.full.pdf>
5. Durbin DR. New recommendations on motor vehicle safety for child passengers. *American family physician*. 2013;87(7):472-474
6. Kahane CJ. Lives Saved by Vehicle Safety Technologies and Associated Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, 1960 to 2012 – Passenger Cars and LTVs. Available at: <https://www-esv.nhtsa.dot.gov/Proceedings/24/files/24ESV-000291.pdf>
7. Dahlberg LL. Guns in the Home and Risk of a Violent Death in the Home: Findings from a National Study. *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 2004;160(10):929-936
8. Lester D. Association of gun-related measures in American states and child and adolescent firearm mortality. *Psychol Rep*. 2005;97(3):757-758
9. Mozaffarian D, Hemenway D, Ludwig DS. Curbing gun violence: lessons from public health successes. *JAMA*. 2013;309(6):551-552
10. Miller M, Azrael D, Hemenway D. Firearm availability and unintentional firearm deaths, suicide, and homicide among 5-14 year olds. *J Trauma*. 2002;52(2):267
11. Cummings P, Grossman DC, Rivara FP, Koepsell TD. State gun safe storage laws and child mortality due to firearms. *JAMA*. 1997;278(13):1084-1086
12. Firearm-related injuries affecting the pediatric population. Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention. American Academy of Pediatrics. *Pediatrics*. 2000;105(4 Pt 1):888-895
13. Connor SM. The association between presence of children in the home and firearm-ownership and -storage practices. *Pediatrics*. 2005;115(1):43
14. Dowd MD, Sege RD. Firearm-related injuries affecting the pediatric population. *Pediatrics*. 2012;130(5):23
15. Mijer J, Wong S. Protecting Colorado Youth from Gun Violence. 2019; April:1-8. Available at: <http://farleyhealthpolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Protecting-Colorado-Youth-from-Gun-Violence-Brief-FHPC.pdf>

APPENDIX

Table 3a: ICD-9 E-codes for causes of firearm injuries

Cause of injury	E code and description
Assault	E965.0-E965.4 (assault by firearms)
Suicide attempt	E955.0-E955.4, E955.6, E955.9 (suicide and self-inflicted injury by firearms)
Unintentional	E922.0-E922.4, E922.8-E922.9 (accidental caused by firearms and air gun missiles)
Undetermined	E985.0-E985.4, E985.6 (injury by firearms or air guns undetermined whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted)
E code, external-cause-of-injury code	

Table 3b: ICD-10 codes for causes of firearm injuries

Cause of injury	ICD-10 code and description
Assault	X93, X94, X95 (gun homicide, attempted or completed)
Suicide attempt	X72, X73, X74 (gun suicide, attempted or completed)
Unintentional	W32, W33, W34 (unintentional shooting, fatal or non-fatal)
Undetermined	Y22, Y23, Y24 (unknown cause, fatal or non-fatal)

Table 3c: ICD-9 E-codes for causes of automobile injuries

Cause of injury	E code
Collision with another motor vehicle	E811
Other motor vehicle traffic accident involving collision with motor vehicle	E812
Collision with other vehicle	E813
Pedestrian collision	E814
Collision on highway	E815
Loss of control	E816
Injured person code	(4th digit)
Driver of motor vehicle other than motorcycle	0
Passenger in motor vehicle other than motorcycle	1
Motorcyclist	2
Passenger on motorcycle	3
Pedal cyclist	6
Pedestrian	7

Table 3d: ICD-10 codes for causes of automobile injuries

Cause of injury	ICD-10 code and description
V40-V49	Car occupant injured in collision
V50-V59	SUV or pickup truck occupant injured in collision

Gun Control Research-Wright and Rossi Department of Justice Study
(Deterrent effect of armed citizens upon criminal behavior)

Professors James D. Wright and Peter Rossi of the Social and Demographic Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts conducted a study in 1982 and 1983 paid for by the U.S. Department of Justice. (Professor Rossi was a former President of the American Sociological Association.) The researchers interviewed 1,874 imprisoned felons in ten states.

Professors Wright and Rossi initially believed that strict gun control deterred crime. The results of their research led them to the conclusion that armed citizens have a beneficial effect in reducing criminal behavior and that harsh laws, such as handgun bans could result in criminals using sawed off rifles and shotguns with more deadly results. 88% of the criminals surveyed by Wright and Rossi agreed with the statement that, "A criminal who wants a handgun is going to get one."

A 1986 review of the professors' work, *Armed and Considered Dangerous*, by Raymond G. Kessler of the Department of Criminal Justice of Memphis State University, concluded, "Although *Armed and Considered Dangerous* is not free of methodological problems, it is the best policy-oriented study of criminals and their guns available."

Wright and Rossi reported that:

81% of interviewees agreed that a "smart criminal" will try to determine if a potential victim is armed.

74% indicated that burglars avoided occupied dwellings, because of fear of being shot.

57% said that most criminals feared armed citizens more than the police.

40% of the felons said that they had been deterred from committing a particular crime, because they believed that the potential victim was armed.

57% of the felons who had used guns themselves said that they had encountered potential victims who were armed.

34% of the criminal respondents said that they had been scared off, shot at, wounded, or captured by an armed citizen.

Based on this government-funded research by Wright and Rossi, it would appear that armed citizens do have a deterrent effect on crime.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., Daly, Kathleen, *Under the Gun, Weapons, Crime, and Violence in America*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York, 1983.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., *The Armed Criminal in America*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1985.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., *Armed and Considered Dangerous, a Survey of Felons and their Firearms*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York, 1986.

I am testifying against the upcoming proposed Legislation HB21-1106 Safe Storage of Firearms. This proposed Bill will do nothing except put undue Burden upon Law abiding Citizens. This proposed Legislation is just a "Feel good" measure that only shows how out of touch the sponsors representation were who wrote it. This Bill would only create more safety issues amongst the Citizens of Colorado, according to CDPHE (Colorado Department of Health) in 2020 there were only 5 Deaths related to Gun accidents of all ages and less than 3 of those were in the youth age group of "0-19". In Colorado 60 people drowned in 2020 of all ages and 11 of those were in the youth age group of "0-19". In Colorado during 2020 there were 596 Fatalities due to traffic accidents of all ages and 62 of those were in the youth age group of "0-19". In Colorado there were 1077 people of all ages that overdosed on drugs and 35 of those were youth in the age group of "0-19". I digress, if you look at the numbers that are clearly public knowledge you will see this same trend for all these numbers over the past years as well showing this is not an actual problem we need focus on "numbers don't lie", if you extrapolate this over the entire United States and look at the numbers more children per year are involved in an accidental drowning than they were in accidental gun related deaths. I believe the number of accidental gun related deaths is less than 500 per year nationally and that includes all ages. As you can see the number are astronomically lower than anything else. Citizens of Colorado are already punished by law when a death occurs due to property they own so creating another layer of punishment will not stop these from happening but only punish those who will not follow these out of touch policy's because they have their own forms of safety that are not approved under these proposed mandated terms.

I have never purchased a firearm that didn't come with a gun lock, this is already a practice happening most everywhere, I also want to mention that these gun locks are for travel storage and long term storage. These locks are not for self defense preparedness as they leave the gun inoperable during the time of need. You can look at all self defense situations including the many that happen in our State of Colorado and these situations only last seconds from the time they start to the time they stop and the threat has been stopped or retreated. The types of gun safes/locks that require finger prints, or combinations also raise the issue of availability. These will hurt many Colorado citizens within lower income whom are also mostly comprised of people of color and immigrants. How will they afford financially to follow this mandate and have a system that is safe so they may access a firearm quickly in their time of need? Will they be forced to break the law or risk following this out of touch mandate and jeopardize the safety of themselves and their families. Allot of these people live in areas where we have fought to defund the police which has created worse response times by the police. Just recently a Denver citizen fought back against multiple intruders in his home with firearms. If this citizen would not have had a firearm at the ready and loaded that was not stored lawfully under HB21-1106 and would not have fell under the safe storage guidelines they would have been a deceased victim. The HB21-1106 safe storage law would have made this citizen a criminal or potentially had him killed during his time of need when the recently defunded police were only minutes away and nobody had even called them yet. These types of stories are available for all that read publically via news and crime statistics. Similar situations happen all the time every year in Colorado alone. These self defense

situations happen astronomically more than the alarming total of 5 accidental deaths per year. HB21-1106 Will only create victims and increase the total amount of deaths in another category because they could not access their firearm when they needed it.

HB21-1106 states that Colorado citizens will be fined for allowing a juvenile "unlawful" access to a firearm. This again is a "feel good" attempt to stop the less than 3 deaths per year that were children. I can look right now in 2020 alone all over and see multiple stories of children using firearms to save a loved one such as a Grandmother, a Sibling, or a Parent. Just recently last week a 12 year old Boy in Goldsboro, NC saved his 73 year old Grandmother from 2 armed assailants who had already shot the Grandmother once inside the home. The 12 year old boy accessed the firearm and stopped the situation by saving his Grandmother and himself. This same situation happens all the time and everywhere including Colorado. Under HB21-1106 having been the Grandson and 12 years old, putting him under the category of juvenile that had "unlawful" access to the firearm HB21-1106 could have created a deceased 12 year old and Grandmother or a criminal. This Boy's grandmother could have locked the gun and never told the young boy the combination or gave him access and this situation would have ended sadly and unfortunately. By approving HB21-1106 you will only create more victims and criminals that vastly outweigh the 3 deaths per year that were youth accidental tragedies.

HB21-1106 aims to curb suicides from firearms but fails and falls short of the actual issue. Suicide prevention has only been shown to decrease from the actual programs that reach out to people in their time of need. When the actual event of a suicide happens due to a firearm HB21-1106 will not stop it. If the person committing suicide is a lawful owner of the firearm this will not help as they already have access to it. If the person committing suicide is a juvenile that falls under "unlawful" they will still find a way if that is their decision. You may remember Adam Lanza from the Sandy Hook Tragedy, he was a juvenile that killed his mother and used her firearms for the horrible event we know today. Please tell me how her safe storage would have prevented this? Unfortunately it wouldn't have, Adam Lanza murdered his mother and then had full access to these firearms even with her safe storage of them currently in place. The Tragedy of the STEM shooting incident that claimed the life of Kendrick Castillo here in Colorado is also another example that proves Safe Storage wouldn't have prevented a tragedy as the firearms used were also safely stored and locked up. Unfortunately tragedies & suicide still happen regardless where HB21-1106 would not have stopped them. Putting this undue burden upon Colorado Citizens is only creating criminals out of law abiding gun owners and is not stopping the real issue.

In summary, HB21-1106 does not have the numbers for proof that it will help more than it will harm. This proposed bill is only "feel good" legislation that will put undue burden upon law abiding Colorado Citizens. The numbers actually reflect that Colorado citizens who own firearms practice their own forms of safe storage and handling of firearms with their families that would be "unlawful" under HB21-1106 and none of these firearms are used in suicide or crime as they outweigh the issue HB21-1106 is trying to fix. These numbers also show that many of Colorado Gun owners teach their children whom fall

under "Unlawful Juvenile" safe practice and firearm responsibility whom have no issues nor will they because of this education and gun safety practice taught by their family & friends. By not opposing HB21-1106 this will only show how out of touch and dangerous Colorado representation truly is towards its law abiding Citizens and show them how their representation only chooses to create criminals and victims out of law abiding gun owners and not curb actual criminal and dangerous activity.

Myself and the many law abiding gun owners in Colorado will not subject our families to the danger of this proposed bill as we already have safe firearm procedures in place that would fall under "unlawful" if HB21-1106 were enacted. We are the majority and our safety & responsibility shows in 2020 alone because the thousands of Colorado gun owners were not a statistic in the 5 accidental deaths related to guns. Our firearm safety practices already work and the numbers show, if this committee does not oppose HB21-1106 and refuses to see the facts then we truly see where their priorities are and how dangerous they are to the people of Colorado.