

March 12, 2024

Written Testimony: HB24-1348 Vehicle Safe Storage

Submitted by: Dr. Tina Pittman Wagers, Boulder

Thank you Committee Members for reading my testimony in support of **HB24-1348 Vehicle Safe Storage**.

This bill can help to prevent instances of stolen guns. Stolen guns are a substantial problem: each year in the US, 380,000 guns are stolen from private gun owners each year and data from 2020 showed that over half (52 percent) were stolen from cars. In fact, guns from cars parked at residences are the most common, such that, on average, a gun is stolen from a car about every 15 minutes. ²

In 2022, The Denver Police Department reported 768 guns were stolen from cars³. Certainly, this legislation would help prevent these guns getting into the hands of criminals, but another important consideration is that safe storage in vehicles would help to prevent guns from getting into the hands of children or youth, or individuals who may present a danger to themselves. We know that accidental gun deaths in children and the high rate of gun violence that ends in suicide in our state are important considerations. Thus, any legislation that makes our communities, our children, and our most vulnerable citizens safer is important for us to pass.

Please vote YES on **HB24-1348**. Thank you for your time and commitment to improving the safety of our community.

Sources:

¹Everytown Research and Policy, analyzed data from cities that report to the FBI in NIBRS data, 2011-2020.

² Everytown for Gun Safety analysis of NIBRS data, 2011–2019, and ACS population data, 2011-2019, accessed December 2021

³ <https://kdvr.com/news/local/768-guns-stolen-from-cars-last-year-as-theft-rate-rises/>

Brady
840 First St. NE Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20002



Testimony of Liddy Ballard, State Policy Manager, Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence
Support for SB24-1348 before the House Judiciary Committee
March 13, 2024

Dear Chair Weissman, Vice-Chair Bacon, and Distinguished Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Founded in 1974, Brady works across Congress, courts, and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike to end America's gun violence epidemic. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Jim and his wife, Sarah, led the fight to pass federal legislation requiring background checks for gun sales. Brady continues to uphold Jim and Sarah's legacy by uniting Americans across the country in the fight to prevent gun violence.

There are evidence-based policy solutions that we know will help to prevent gun violence in Colorado. The bill before you today, HB24-1348, will encourage responsible and safe firearm storage practices in vehicles and save lives by updating Colorado's existing code to reflect the danger of storing a firearm unsecured in an unattended vehicle, subsequently preventing crime and saving lives. **For these reasons, Brady urges a favorable report on HB24-1348.**

Why Safe Storage in Vehicles is Crucial

Safe storage should not be an imperative only within the home; it is crucial that gun owners store their firearms securely in their vehicles to prevent unintended access and theft. Recent reports show that over 40,000 firearms were stolen out of cars in major cities in 2020.¹ The reality is that is not only prolific, but on the rise: In an analysis of FBI crime data from 271 cities across 38 states, researchers found that over half (52%) of gun thefts in 2020 were from cars.² However, Municipalities are not required to report data on guns stolen from vehicles, and often this type of theft goes unreported, meaning numbers are likely much higher. This marks a significant increase from 10 years prior, when less than a quarter (24%) of gun thefts were from cars. This same data reveals that on average, at least one gun is stolen from a car every 15 minutes.³ But this is not

¹ Fausset, R. (2023, March 25). *The largest source of stolen guns? Parked cars*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/25/us/illegal-guns-parked-cars.html>

² See footnote 9.

³ O'Toole, M., Szkola J., Burd-Sharps, S. (2022, May 9). *Gun thefts from cars: the largest source of stolen guns*. Everytown for

just a national problem – Colorado is suffering too: According to the Denver Police Department, 768 guns were stolen out of vehicles in Denver alone in 2022.⁴

Stolen guns are a large source of firearms that are trafficked into communities already disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Most of the crime in these communities that have been plagued with gun violence are carried out with guns that have been diverted from the legal market. This policy will prevent one of the major sources of those trafficked firearms.

Researchers found a significant negative correlation between the strength of gun laws in a state and their rate of gun thefts from cars; the five cities with the highest rates of gun theft from cars are all in states with especially weak gun laws.⁵ Colorado now has the opportunity to protect its constituents by ensuring firearms are safely stored in vehicles.

What HB24-1348 Would Do

HB24-1348 requires a person to securely store a firearm in an unattended vehicle in either a locked hard-sided container that is placed out of plain view, or in a locked hard-sided container in the locked trunk of the vehicle. For the purpose of this bill, the glove compartment and center console do not qualify as locked hard-sided containers, as they are easily tampered with and an obvious first stop for a thief. Additionally, the bill requires that the office of suicide prevention include on a public page of the website information about the unlawful storage of firearms, including in vehicles. The department will also develop a notice to be displayed on the premise of a licensed firearms dealer that informs purchasers of laws related to the unlawful storage of firearms, including in a vehicle. Unlawful storage of a firearm in a vehicle is considered a civil infraction and is therefore punished by a fine of no more than five hundred dollars. The bill has exceptions for peace officers, antique firearms, or a person engaged in lawful hunting activities.

Brady strongly encourages a favorable report on HB24-1348, which mandates that firearms be stored in a securely locked hard-sided container in unattended vehicles.

Sincerely,
Liddy Ballard
State Policy Manager
The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

Gun Safety. <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-thefts-from-cars-the-largest-source-of-stolen-guns/>

⁴ Turner, S. (2023, May 17). *768 guns stolen from cars last year as theft rate rises*. Fox 31 Denver KDVR. <https://kdvr.com/news/local/768-guns-stolen-from-cars-last-year-as-theft-rate-rises/>

⁵ See footnote 11.

Testimony in opposition to: HB24-1348 Secure Firearms Storage in a Vehicle. House Judiciary Committee

Thank you, Chair and Committee

My name is Robert Edmiston. I am with the Firearms Coalition of Colorado, an NRA-affiliated, all-volunteer, grassroots organization dedicated to the protection of individual rights and public safety. I am a former U.S. Army officer and vocational rehabilitation counselor. I have a master's degree in psychology, counseling, and guidance.

While we appreciate the efforts of the sponsors, I am writing in opposition to the measure under consideration. We believe the bill is dangerous to the people of Colorado, especially in conjunction with SB24-131, which severely limits where concealed carry permit holders may legally exercise their natural right to armed self-defense, which is recognized by the US Constitution.

The bill is dangerous, because HB24-1348 and SB24-131 force concealed carry permit holders to either leave their guns at home or lock their firearms in hard cases out of sight, either in the passenger compartments or the trunks of their vehicles before entering a wide variety of locations posted against concealed carry. These are difficult operations to safely carry out.

Putting a firearm in a hard case in the trunk of a vehicle in a parking lot is not a smart move, since any criminal surveilling the parking lot will realize that something of value is being placed in a more secure storage area. The criminal can then choose either to break into the vehicle, steal the vehicle, or carjack the now presumably unarmed driver. Parking a few blocks away to make the transfer is inconvenient, but marginally better. Of course, it would still be possible for a criminal to observe and follow the unarmed concealed carry permit holder to the posted location and implement one of the three illegal options offered the criminal by this bill.

An alert criminal might also notice a person who takes a little longer to get out of a vehicle and suppose that person was putting a gun in a locked case in the passenger compartment. Again, the criminal gets three illegal choices.

Probably the safest way for a permit holder to comply with both laws and still exercise part of his or her Second Amendment rights, would be to put the gun in a concealed hard case out of sight in the passenger compartment several blocks from the posted location and hope that he or she is not observed. The chilling effect that this awkward, legally-mandated, forced disarmament will have on concealed carry in Colorado is surely not among the intended consequences of the honorable legislators who proposed this measure.

We urge a "No" vote by members of the committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Firearms Coalition of Colorado, PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454

Robert Edmiston
Volunteer Lobbyist
The Firearms Coalition of Colorado
PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454



Re: opposition HB24-1348 lock box in vehiclesSidney Patin to: LCS Committees
03/14/2024 01:24 PM

HB24-1348 makes no sense. Any gun owner would have the firearms out of plain sight and secured in a locked vehicle. There is no need to impose an additional requirement of having to secure all firearms in a locked box inside of a locked vehicle. The proposal is superfluous and is a violation of the right to keep and bear arms contained in the 2nd Amendment. The proposal would require gun owners to unnecessarily expend funds to hide and protect and already hidden firearm in a locked vehicle, forcing the owner to expend funds to exercise his 2nd Amendment rights, which is prohibited by the Constitution. The bill should be rejected.

Sidney L. Patin
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Colorado Springs, CO 80919
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The Colorado General Assembly has moved to a new email domain. Please replace @state.co.us with @coleg.gov in your address book.



March 2024

TO: House Judiciary Committee

RE: HB1348--Secure Firearm Storage in a Vehicle

Dear Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are members of AAUW branches around Colorado.

AAUW has declared that gun violence is a public health crisis, with women being especially vulnerable to violence involving firearms. Gun safety is a complex issue, one which we need to deal with on many different fronts. Along with other measures Colorado has taken to improve gun safety, HB1348 is a common-sense bill to require safe storage of firearms in an unattended vehicle. This bill may not solve the problem of gun theft, but it will be an important new barrier to would-be thieves. The fewer guns in the wrong hands will benefit women and the community at large.

AAUW of Colorado strongly supports HB 1348 and requests your YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming a law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden".

Su Ryden
AAUW of Colorado Public Policy Co-Director

16699 E. Kentucky Ave. • Aurora, CO 80017
303.898.5797
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American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

March 10, 2024

Written Testimony: HB24-1348 Vehicle Safe Storage

Submitted by: Paige Leonard, Boulder

Thank you Committee Members for reading my testimony in support of **HB24-1348 Vehicle Safe Storage**.

Stolen guns from vehicles are not a unique problem in Colorado. Across the U.S., research suggests that nearly one-quarter of stolen guns are taken from cars and other vehicles.¹ While guns can be stolen in a variety of ways (e.g., pickpocketing, burglary, robbery), in 2020, over half (52 percent) were stolen from cars.²

In 2022, The Denver Police Department reported 768 guns were stolen from cars³. That's nearly 800 guns that have the potential to end up in the wrong hands, posing an enormous threat to the safety of Coloradans.

Responsible firearms ownership is imperative to community safety. We need to pass each and every bill we can to make our communities safer. This common-sense bill will save lives.

You have the opportunity to make Colorado a safer state to live in. Please vote YES on **HB24-1348**. Thank you for your time and commitment to improving the safety of our community.

Sources:

¹ *The Trace* and Everytown, analyzed data from 1,054 law enforcement agencies in 36 states and Washington, DC from 2006-2015.

² Everytown for Gun Safety analysis of NIBRS data, 2011–2019, and ACS population data, 2011-2019, accessed December 2021

³ <https://kdvr.com/news/local/768-guns-stolen-from-cars-last-year-as-theft-rate-rises/>

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD FAIRFAX,

VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

March 12, 2024

House Judiciary Committee
200 E Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chair Weissman:

I am writing to you regarding HB24-1348 and the National Rifle Association's (NRA) position on this piece of legislation.

HB 24-1348 mandates that firearms stored in unattended vehicles must be kept in a locked hard-sided container that is kept out of view or within the locked trunk of the vehicle. The bill creates civil penalties for infractions.

This bill does nothing to prevent crime, and only targets law-abiding gun owners. Again, I urge you to please OPPOSE HB 24-1348! Lawmakers should look to target criminals not victims of crime.

For these reasons, and several others, the NRA strongly opposes the passage of HB24-1348.

Sincerely,

Travis Couture-Lovelady
State Director – Colorado
NRA-ILA

TO: Chair Weissman, Vice Chair Bacon, and Members of the Committee
Colorado House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Timothy Carey, JD
Law and Policy Advisor, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions

DATE: March 13, 2024

RE: HB 24-1348 Secure Firearm Storage in a Vehicle

My name is Timothy Carey, and I am a Law and Policy Advisor at the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions. Our Center uses rigorous research to inform effective policy solutions through the development, advocacy, and defense of innovative policies and programs to end the epidemic of gun violence. Given the efficacy of safe and secure storage practices in preventing guns from being stolen, diverted into illegal markets, and used in gun crime, The Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions supports the favorable passage of House Bill 24-1348: Secure Firearm Storage in Vehicle.

Colorado's Safe Storage in Vehicles Bill

House Bill 1348 is a safe storage bill designed to prevent the theft of guns stored in cars. More specifically, the bill requires that firearms in unattended vehicles are stored in a locked hard-sided container that is either in a locked trunk or not in plain view. Knowingly violating this policy would result in a civil infraction punishable by a fine up to \$500. Glovebox compartments are not considered locked hard-sided containers for the purposes of this policy.

Gun Violence in Colorado

According to CDC data, over 1,000 Coloradans died by gun violence in 2021.ⁱ About 70% of these deaths were suicides. Guns were a significant source of intentional death in Colorado. Roughly 54% of all suicides and 75% of all homicides across the state in 2021 were by firearms. Like much of the nation, firearms are also the leading cause of death among children ages 1-19 in Colorado.ⁱⁱ

Guns Stolen from Cars Endanger Communities

Most gun homicides and assaults in the US involve illegally acquired guns.ⁱⁱⁱ A significant source of illegal guns is theft, the overwhelming majority of which are stolen from private persons.^{iv} According to national FBI data analysis, most reported stolen guns (52%) were taken from cars in 2020.^v The same report found that gun theft from cars had increased dramatically within the last 10 years, contributing to the overall increase in gun theft across the nation.^{vi} This trend is exacerbated by the lack of safe storage by US gun owners generally. Survey data collected by

Johns Hopkins researchers in 2016 found that less than half (46%) of Americans reported stored their guns safely.^{vii}

Colorado follows national trends. Thousands of firearms are stolen from cars in Colorado every year.^{viii} The Denver Police Department reported that at least 768 guns were stolen from cars in their city in 2022.^{ix} That is enough firearms to arm a large battalion of soldiers, likely in the hands of people who seek to harm themselves or others, from Denver alone.^x However, these thefts are not inevitable. Requiring secure storage of firearms in vehicles could help prevent gun theft from cars.

Safe Storage Laws Save Lives

Safe storage laws, such as HB 24-1348, are based on a foundational aspect of injury prevention: separating the harm, in time and space, from what needs to be protected. We have seen the preventative effects of safe storage in action most clearly in youth.

Similar safe storage laws focused on preventing youth access to firearms in homes have shown great promise in reducing youth gun injuries and deaths. Such laws have been associated with a 26% decrease in nonfatal gun injuries for minors and lower rates of teen suicide by firearm.^{xi, xii} On the inverse, we have seen that homes where youth are dying by firearm suicide are far less likely to safely and securely store their guns.^{xiii} Investigations of youth and adolescent school shooters by the U.S. Secret Service also found that over 75% of school shooters got their firearm from the home of a friend or family member, the majority of which were not secured properly.^{xiv} All too often, unsecured firearms result in preventable tragedies.

Conclusion

Safe and secure gun storage practices prevent those who should not have guns, such as thieves, youth, and those at an elevated risk of harming themselves or others, from accessing guns. The Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions urges you to protect the life and property of Coloradans by voting in favor of HB 24-1348.

Sincere Regards,

Timothy Carey

ⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *About Underlying Cause of Death, 1999-2021* (2022).

ⁱⁱ Ari Davis, Rose Kim, & Cassandra Crifasi, *U.S. Gun Violence in 2021: An Accounting of a Public Health Crisis*, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions (2023), <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/2024-01/2023-june-cgvs-u-s-gun-violence-in-2021-v3.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Daniel C. Semenza et al., *Firearm Availability, Homicide, and the Context of Structural Disadvantage*, 27 *Homicide Studies* 208–228 (2021).

^{iv} See Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, *National Firearms Commerce and Trafficking Assessment (NFCTA): Crime Guns - Volume Two*, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (Jan. 2023), <https://www.atf.gov/firearms/national-firearms-commerce-and-trafficking-assessment-nfcta-crime-guns-volume-two>

^v Megan J. O’Toole, Jay Szkola & Sarah Burd-Sharps, *Gun Thefts from Cars: The Largest Source of Stolen Guns*, Everytown Research & Policy (May 2022), <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-thefts-from-cars-the-largest-source-of-stolen-guns/>.

^{vi} *Id.*

^{vii} Cassandra K. Crifasi et al., *Storage Practices of US Gun Owners in 2016*, 108 *American Journal of Public Health* 532–537 (2018).

^{viii} Colorado Attorney General, *Storing Firearms Safely Saves Lives*, Colorado Attorney General (Feb. 2021), <https://coag.gov/firearmsafety/>

^{ix} Shaul Turner, *768 Guns Stolen from Cars Last Year as Theft Rate Rises*, FOX31 Denver (May 2023), <https://kdvr.com/news/local/768-guns-stolen-from-cars-last-year-as-theft-rate-rises/>

^x See U.S. Department of Defense, *Military Units: Army*, U.S. Department of Defense, <https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Experience/Military-Units/army/#army>, noting that U.S. Army battalions are typically made up of a few hundred to 1,000 soldiers.

^{xi} Jeffrey DeSimone, Sara Markowitz & Jing Xu, *Child Access Prevention Laws and Nonfatal Gun Injuries*, 80 *Southern Economic Journal* 5–25 (2013).

^{xii} Daniel Webster et al., *Association Between Youth-Focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides*, 292 *JAMA* 1178 (2004).

^{xiii} Renee M. Johnson et al., *Who Are the Owners of Firearms Used in Adolescent Suicides?*, 40 *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 609–611 (2010).

^{xiv} United States Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center, *Protecting America’s Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2019), https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/Protecting_Americas_Schools.pdf.