



February 28th, 2024

Re: House File 4300 – Standards for safe storage of firearms and criminal penalties established for failing to meet those standards.

Members of the House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee:

The Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus, the trusted voice of Minnesota's gun owners to defend and restore the right to keep and bear arms, opposes House File 4300.

Our opposition is grounded in the following challenges with the bill that impact the core right of self-defense within the Second Amendment and create specific additional safety challenges for gun owners:

- Current law as defined in MN 609.666 prohibits the negligent storage of a loaded firearm in a location where a child is likely to gain access. We believe this is the right approach rather than mandating a specific method of storage that impedes the right to possess a firearm for the purpose of self-defense.
- The guarantee of criminal immunity is more than enough incentive to gain compliance to these requirements.
- This bill treats a farmer in Aitkin who keeps a firearm ready to fend off predators from his livestock the same as a day-care operator in Apple Valley. This one size fits all solution is impractical.
- This bill does not differentiate between someone who has no contact with children and prohibited persons – and others who do.
- We believe that a gross misdemeanor offense paired with a prohibition on firearms ownership is too high for a strict liability offense as defined in this proposed bill for a first-time offense. A well-intentioned and safe hunter could go to jail for a year and become a prohibited person for a simple mistake.
- This bill provides no funding or requirements for an educational campaign around new requirements that would impact peaceable gun owners across the state.



- This bill does not address the issue of large collectors who have walk-in secure storage rooms with vault doors or other secure access.

On behalf of our members,

A blue ink signature of Bryan Strawser, written in a cursive style.

Bryan Strawser
Chair

A black ink signature of Robert T. Doar, written in a cursive style.

Robert T. Doar
Senior Vice President, Government Relations