

February 2, 2023

Chair Moller and Members of the Minnesota Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee:

My name is Christopher Lee and I join you to testify on behalf of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc. in opposition to House File 396. NSSF is the firearm industry trade association. As the firearm industry trade association, our membership includes nearly 10,000 member companies across the country. According to the most recent available data, our industry employs over 11,500 Minnesotans and in 2021, had an economic impact of over \$2.7 billion on the state.

Members of the firearm industry have taken a leadership role in promoting the safe and responsible use and storage of firearms. Before I address concerns with this specific bill, I would like to take a moment to call to your attention the positive downward trend in accidental deaths involving firearms. They have been decreasing consistently since recordkeeping began in 1903 and have dramatically declined in the last 20 years. Firearms are involved in less than 1% of all accidental deaths in the United States. A person is 56 times more likely to be involved in an unintentional fatality with a motor vehicle than with a firearm. Between 2005 and 2015 specifically, the United States experienced a 38 percent decline in fatal firearm accidents. This is largely due to firearm industry safety programs like Project ChildSafe. Project ChildSafe is a comprehensive safety program for firearm owners through which our industry has distributed over 38 million firearm safety kits over the past 20 years. That is in addition to the 70 million free gun locks that firearm manufacturers have included with firearms since 1998. Manufacturers provide product manuals with their products that provide important information about how to safely and properly store firearms so that they cannot be accessed by unauthorized persons.

The firearm industry is already making the efforts that are called for in this bill, so the mandate isn't necessary. Furthermore, law-abiding gun owners know best how and when to secure their firearms, dependent upon their unique living situation. Government mandates are not the answer. Education is the answer.

Too many laws that are already in place simply are not being enforced and criminals are not being prosecuted. HF 396 would only burden and endanger law-abiding gun owners. For that reason, NSSF opposes House File 396.

Respectfully,



Christopher Lee

Director, Government Relations – State Affairs