

Public Safety Committee Testimony
Hilary Brasel
Feb 29, 2023

Thank you to Public Safety Committee Chair Moeller and Children and Families Chair Pinto for hearing this bill. Thank you, Rep Becker-Finn, for introducing this legislation and connecting me to this important and personal topic.

I am here to share the tragic story of Michael Brasel, my husband who was murdered in the front yard of our home at 7:30 on Saturday morning, May 6, 2023. Michael noticed a young man breaking into our family's car and went to our front yard to stop them. Michael was shot 3 times at close range in his chest and back by a 17-year-old young man who was "the look out" for the crime. I awoke to the 3 shots, and a loud car driving away from our home. My 14-year-old son had awoken to the loud car, yelling in the front of our yard, and witnessed lots of the scene in front of our home. As a nurse, I was the first responder for Michael and tried to perform lifesaving measures, while my older son called 911 and my younger son watched the horror play out. Michael Brasel was attended to by SPFD and brought to HCMC where he was pronounced dead within 30 mins of the shooting. My sons no longer have their father, I no longer have my husband, and the ripples of his death have torn apart the lives of our family, close friends, neighbors, and countless community members as Michael was a dedicated carpenter, artist, and hockey coach.

My list of concerns for public safety related to Michael's Murder is long :

- There were 4 young men in the car, all with previous history with guns, and violent crimes both as juveniles and some as adults.
- They all had a criminal history, were on probation at the time of the crime, and specifically the shooter had just been released from probation in April 2023.
- The shooter was also pulled over on May 2, 2023, by police in the south metro, but nothing came from the traffic stop.
- These same 4 young men went out "car shopping" looking for things to steal starting the night of Friday May 5, 2023, through the early morning of May 6, 2023.
- They planned ahead to bring a gun with them "car shopping" for protection, and took turns as "look out" for each other while breaking into the cars.
- The gun they used to murder Michael, was stolen from a family member of one of the young men, as it was not properly stored by the gun owner.
- Following Michael's murder, the stolen gun was kept under the driver's seat of the getaway vehicle by the young man who broke into our family car. Meaning -- This gun was KEPT after Michael was murdered; presumably in case it was needed for future crimes.
- SPPD retrieved the gun from under the driver's seat through a traffic stop, a month after Michael's murder. This helped us have a strong case to convict the young men.
- 2 young men pleaded guilty to Michael's murder are currently serving time – but nothing will ever replace Michael's life that was taken and all the life we had yet to live together.

- It was only 57 seconds that the criminals spent at our home to drive up, break in, interact with Michael, shoot him 3 times, and speed away. But this crime will have a lifetime of consequences and our lives will never be the same.
- I urge you to support this legislation.
- I believe the proper storage of guns could have prevented Michael's murder and can prevent this type of tragedy from destroying other lives in the future.

There are additional documents that have been submitted to this committee for your reference. I hope they help tell Michael's Story, so that the loss of his life will not without change in how guns are stored and accessed in the state of Minnesota.