



February 26, 2025

House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee

Chair Novotny and Committee Members:

You and I share the same desire to make Minnesota safer. As a health care professional devoted to the wellbeing of children, I am deeply concerned about the danger HF13 would pose for young people in our state.

Children are naturally curious and often unaware of boundaries or potential threats. Imagine a child inadvertently wandering into a neighbor's yard or approaching the wrong house while playing or seeking help. You may remember [news stories](#) of young people getting shot under similar circumstances. With this law, a young person's innocent actions could be misinterpreted as threatening, leading to fatal consequences.

Children from marginalized communities, including those with mental illness or autism, face even more risks. Their behaviors, which may not follow perceived norms, could be easily misconstrued as threatening. Young people with special needs could be harmed simply because their actions are misunderstood. Rather than fostering understanding and communication, this bill would promote a culture of fear and rapid escalation to violence.

You and I both want fewer gun deaths in our communities. But this measure would have the opposite effect. [An analysis](#) of the impact of proposals like HF13 found that states with these laws saw an increase in homicides. The [average rate of gun deaths](#) in states with these laws is more than twice the rate of gun deaths in Minnesota. Our citizens already have the legal right to defend themselves in harmful and potentially deadly situations. This measure would only put more lives at risk.

As a pediatric emergency physician, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects of gun violence on children and families. I have treated young victims of gunshots, and I know the lifelong physical and emotional scars they carry. We need thoughtful, preventive measures, not laws that lead to more tragedy.

I urge you to oppose HF13. It would be detrimental to the health and safety of our community, including our youngest citizens. The protection of children and other vulnerable populations should be our top priority.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Marc Gorelick, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Children's Minnesota