

February 3, 2023

Dear Minnesota House Public Safety, Finance and Policy Committee,

We, medical students at the University of Minnesota and founders of the school's Scrubs Addressing the Firearm Epidemic chapter, are writing on behalf of peers to express our strong support for the following four firearm-related legislative bills: HF 396, HF 14, HF 15, and HF 601.

As future healthcare providers, we are deeply concerned about the impact of firearms on public health. Gun violence is a major public health crisis in the United States, and we believe that it is our duty to advocate for common-sense solutions that can help reduce its incidence. Particularly, as gun violence disproportionately affects minority and marginalized communities, it is imperative that we take action to address this issue.

HF 396, the Safe storage of firearms and ammunition bill, will help prevent unauthorized access to firearms and reduce the risk of accidental injuries and deaths. Locking devices for firearms should be standard, and it is important to hold those who do not comply with these regulations accountable. If enacted, this bill would put Minnesota at the forefront of responsible firearms ownership and make it a leader in public safety across the United States.

HF 14, the Criminal background checks bill, is essential to ensure that firearms do not fall into the hands of those who pose a danger to themselves or others. Expanding the grounds for disqualification of transferee permits will help keep firearms out of the wrong hands and reduce the likelihood of gun violence. If passed, this bill would make Minnesota a leader in responsible firearms transfers and set a standard for other states to follow.

HF 15, the Law enforcement and family members petition bill, will allow law enforcement and family members to intervene in cases where someone poses a significant danger to themselves or others by possessing a firearm. This will not only help prevent mass shootings, but also protect those who may be in danger of harming themselves. By passing this bill, we can help keep firearms out of the hands of those who pose a threat to marginalized communities and protect their safety.

HF 601, the Lost and stolen firearms bill, will help track firearms that have fallen into the wrong hands, making it easier for law enforcement to recover them and reduce the risk of gun violence.

In conclusion, we sincerely believe that these bills are important steps towards reducing gun violence and ensuring the safety of all Minnesotans, especially those in minority and marginalized communities. By passing these bills, Minnesota can lead the way in responsible firearms ownership and be recognized as a leader in public safety across the United States, with a focus on protecting those who are most vulnerable. We hope the committee will see these reasons and vote in their favor.

Sincerely,

Ribhav Gupta, MS, MS3
UMN SAFE Founder

Kelly Reger, MS3
UMN SAFE Board Member