



STATE SENATOR  
**CHARLETA B. TAVARES**

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15<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

**Sponsor Testimony**  
**Presented by: Senator Charleta B. Tavares**  
**Sub. Senate Bill 279**  
**Government Oversight and Reform**  
**Senator Bill Coley, Chair**  
**Wednesday, June 6, 2018**

Good afternoon, Chairman Coley, Ranking Member Schiavoni and members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present Sub. Senate Bill 279 which will amend the Revised Code sections that deal with the transfer and storage of firearms.

This legislation will require a person selling a firearm or transferring a firearm to inform the transferee that no person shall store or leave a firearm in any place not under the person's immediate control where there's reason to believe that a minor may gain access to the firearm. If a

firearm is stored or left in violation of this provision, and a minor gains access to the firearm and causes death or bodily injury to any person with the firearm, penalty will be a felony of the third degree.

In the U.S., there have been at least 82 unintentional shootings by children so far this year. Last May, a 7 month-old baby was hospitalized after being accidentally shot by a 4-year old at a home in Temple, Texas. Sadly, these events happen more frequently than they should and closer to home than many believe. On Monday, June 4, 2018, a two-year-old was fatally shot by his 13-year-old brother by accident in Harrison Township in Dayton, OH.

Every year nearly 300 children ages 17 and under gain access to a gun and unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. Almost 500 more die by the completion of suicide with a gun. According to the Children's Defense Fund, over 1.6 million children and teens under the age of eighteen (18) are living in homes with loaded and unlocked firearms. Approximately 90% of fatal firearm incidents involving children occur

within the home, including intentional shootings, suicides, and unintentional shootings.

Currently, 27 states and Washington D.C. have some form of a child access to firearms prevention act. The states are: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Chairman Coley and members of the Committee, I appreciate your attention to this important issue and I respectfully request your favorable consideration and passage of Sub. Senate Bill 279. Thank you and I am happy to respond to any questions from the committee.