



September 26, 2023

House Ways and Means Committee:

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chairman Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy and all members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony regarding House Bill 186 on behalf of Sandy Hook Promise.

Sandy Hook is a national nonprofit formed and led by several family members whose loved ones were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012. Our mission is to educate and empower youth and adults to prevent violence in their schools, homes, and communities. Sandy Hook Promise also advances school safety, youth mental health, and responsible gun ownership at the state and federal levels through nonpartisan policy and partnerships. Across Ohio, we have more than 79,000 grassroots supporters.

Sandy Hook Promise would like to thank Rep. Brewer and Rep. Brennan for introducing HB186 which would exempt sales tax on firearm storage devices. Sandy Hook Promise is in support of this crucial legislation which will ensure all gun owners in Ohio have access to secure storage devices to securely store their firearms to prevent accidental shooting in children, prevent youth suicides and reduce theft of firearms.

Firearms are the number one cause of child deaths in America. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, when youth are killed by firearms, these deaths are classified by intent categories, including unintentional (when a youth gains access to an unsecured firearm and unintentionally kills themselves or someone else), homicide, and suicide. Overall, ~60% of youth deaths from firearm injuries are homicides, 35% are suicides, and 4% are unintentional firearm deaths.¹

When guns aren't securely stored, the consequences can be devastating. There are far too many news stories that end in tragedy after a firearm is left unsecured. You may have heard in the news of a firearm discharging after a young child gets their hands on it causing injury or death to a sibling or parent. Or you may have heard of a teenager using an unsecured firearm to end their own life.

HB186 is a solution that helps families prevent any one of these tragedies. By exempting sales tax of firearm safety devices, all Ohio gun owners will have access to storing devices to securely

1 Cunningham RM, Walton MA, Carter PM. The major causes of death in children and adolescents in the United States. *N Engl J Med.* 2018;379(25):2468–2475 [Google Scholar](#) [Crossref](#) [PubMed](#)

store their firearms to protect their children from accidental shootings and suicide. HB186 is a clear step in the right direction.

In closing, Sandy Hook Promise is in support of HB186 because it will save lives and protect children from harmful accidental shootings and prevent suicides. Sandy Hook Promise thanks the sponsors and this committee for their time and it is our wish for the families of Ohio that they be safe in their homes, communities and schools.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Calandrian Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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