



Office of Senator Willis E. Blackshear Jr.
State Senator

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the Ways and Means Committee, thank you for allowing us to present testimony on SB 96.

SB 96 would take an incentives-based approach to encouraging responsible gun ownership in the form of 2 tax credits:

- 1 for safe storage equipment
- 1 for gun safety training

These tax credits may be equal to the costs of the safe storage equipment/firearm training, and max out at \$250 each.

This legislation will save lives. According to the CDC, unintentional injury is the #1 leading cause of death for children and adolescents aged 1-17. Firearms are the leading injury method¹ Another study shows that most gun injury incidents among children in the U.S. take place at the victim's residence (64%), and in 80.9% of cases the firearm owner was a relative of the victim.² These statistics illuminate the reality that many children can gain access to firearms in the absence of safe storage equipment. That access can prove to be fatal. By increasing education on the "Big 3" of secure firearm storage (Keeping guns unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition) we can help reduce gun deaths.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/pdfs/mm7250a1-H.pdf>

² <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37357309/>



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Outside of accidental firearm injuries and deaths there is the possibility of suicide by firearms. Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among adolescents³, and firearms are the most lethal method. By practicing safe storage adults can keep firearms away from teens that may be experiencing suicidal ideation.

This bill does not impose mandates or infringe on gun owners' rights. Instead, we've taken a permissive approach in the hopes of taking steps toward responsible gun ownership. Please join us in taking action to promote gun safety through this legislation.

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the Ways and Means Committee, thank you again for allowing us to present testimony on SB 96.

³ <https://wonder.cdc.gov/controller/saved/D76/D270F770>