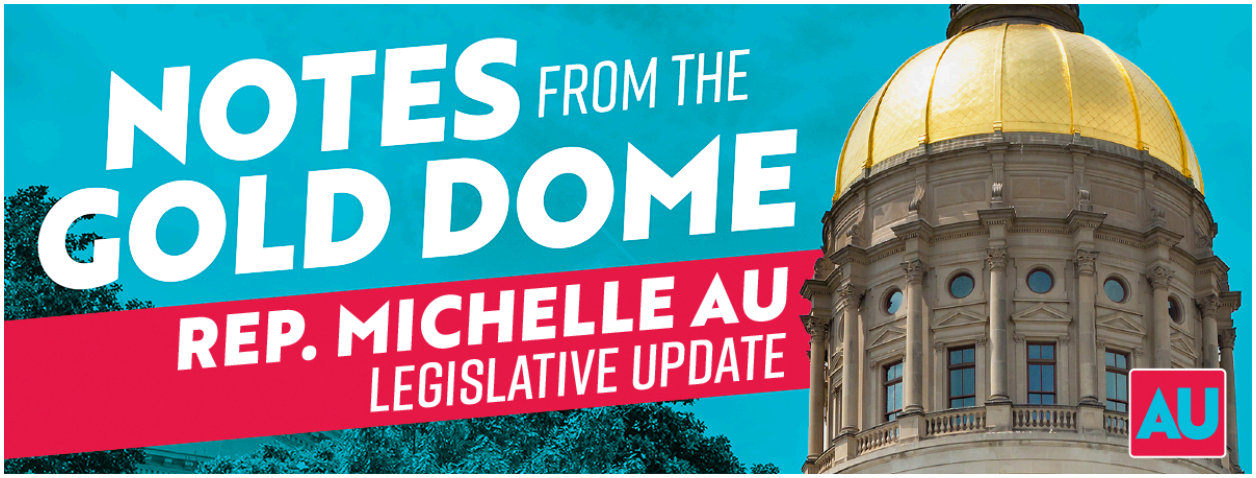


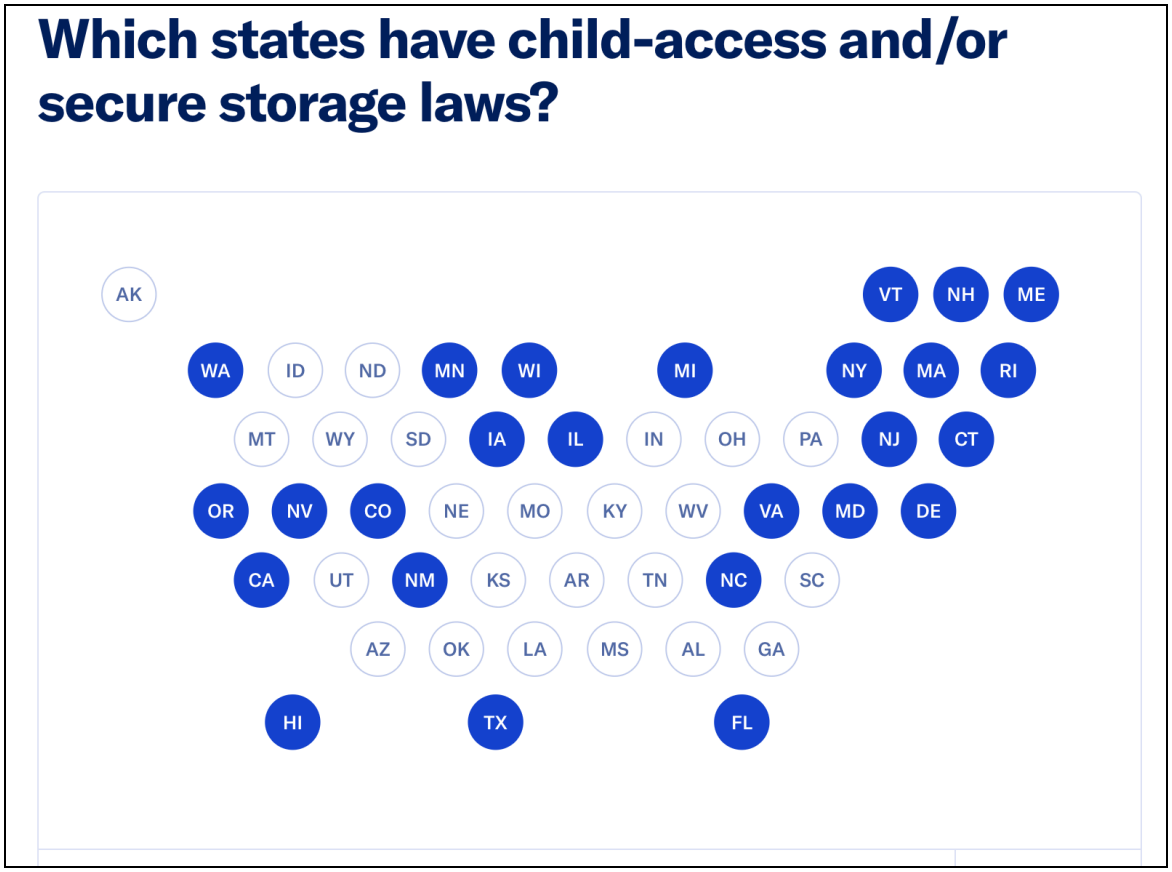
HB 1: THE PEDIATRIC HEALTH SAFE STORAGE ACT ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Welcome, and thank you for your help in advancing our slate of gun safety bills in Georgia!

Our top priority this session is **HB 1, the Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act.**

The Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act aims to keep our children safer from gun violence, which as of 2020 is the #1 cause of death in children and teens in the United States.

This bill simply requires that guns that could be accessed by unsupervised minors be stored securely. More than half the states in this country have some form of child access or secure storage law, including Florida and Texas. **Georgia is not among them.**



(Everytown for Gun Safety: Secure Storage)

Some history on this bill.

In February of 2023, the Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act became the only substantive piece of gun safety legislation to receive a hearing in the Republican majority state legislature in years. However, the committee Chair subsequently indicated that he had no intention of holding a vote on the bill, effectively killing its prospects for the biennium.

Inaction on this issue is unacceptable. That's why we need your help.

Gun safety needs to be a priority for Georgia with safe storage at the top, particularly after the tragic shooting at Apalachee High School, the deadliest school shooting in the history of the state. As many may recall, the shooter at Apalachee was only 14 years old. *Had we passed The Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act in 2023, this and many other tragedies could have been averted.*

Therefore, we re-introduced it for the 2025-2026 biennium as **HB 1**. It has again been assigned to the House Committee for Public Safety and Homeland Security.

In order to progress, HB 1 needs to receive a full committee hearing and a vote before Crossover Day.

Below you will find a **toolkit** on how to contact key members of the Republican House majority to urge them to act on this issue, along with a **script** that you can use for emails or calls.

Check back here often for updates on our public advocacy campaign, links to future advocacy events, and more targeted calls to action so we can advance HB 1 and get it to the Governor's desk for his signature in 2025.

Owning guns may be a right, but protecting children is our collective responsibility. Enough talk. ***It's time to act.***

QUICK LINKS: WHO TO CONTACT

The Republican leadership, in particular the Speaker of the House, and committee chairs, determine what bills are heard, voted on, and when. The job of an elected official is to listen to their constituents, and for this reason **it is important to call, email, write letters, visit their offices**—whatever it takes to get them to move on this issue!

Here's how to reach them:

Speaker of the House, Jon Burns
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Though every form of personal contact is important, **the most effective is in-person advocacy**, either in legislator's districts or at the Capitol.

We work with **Georgia Majority for Gun Safety** on these efforts at the Capitol, you can sign up to join their work here.

Medical professionals should also consider signing up to join **Georgia Clinicians for Gun Safety** here.

WHAT TO SAY: EMAIL SCRIPT (can copy and paste) or **CALL SCRIPT**

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Dear [ENTER NAME HERE],

As your constituent, I'm writing today urging your support to pass a firearm safe storage law in Georgia to keep our children safer. My name is [YOUR NAME] and I am [ENTER PERSONAL INFORMATION HERE, PARTICULARLY IF YOU ARE A PARENT, A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL, A GUN OWNER, LAW ENFORCEMENT/MILITARY BACKGROUND, A HISTORICALLY REPUBLICAN VOTER, etc.]

Gun violence is the #1 cause of death in kids and teens in the United States. These deaths include accidental shootings, homicide, and suicide. HB1, the Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act, seeks to mitigate this leading cause of preventable injury and death.

Gun violence is not a partisan issue. Gun violence is not a political issue. Gun violence is a public health issue, and as such, **HB 1 deserves to be heard and voted on in committee prior to Crossover Day, to give this issue and Georgia families the respect they deserve.**

Owning a gun is a right. Protecting children is a responsibility, and Georgians need to know that members of the legislature take seriously, not just in word, but in deed.

Thank you for your support in bringing HB 1, the Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act, to a full committee hearing and vote early in the 2025 legislative session.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME HERE]
[YOUR ADDRESS and CONTACT INFORMATION]

—---------

QUICK FACTS: SAFE STORAGE

(from the Giffords Law Center, "Child Access Prevention and Safe Storage")

4.6 million minors in the US live in homes with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm.[1] Many children know where their parents keep their guns and have accessed household guns — even if their parents think otherwise.

Although 70% of parents reported that adolescents could not independently access firearms in their household, over one-third of children belonging to those households reported being able to access the firearm in less than five minutes.[2]

Many of these children handled guns without their parents' knowledge. Nearly a quarter of parents did not know that their children had handled a gun in their house.[3]

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[1] Deborah Azrael, Joanna Cohen, Carmel Salhi, and Matthew Miller, "Firearm Storage in Gun–owning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey," Journal of Urban Health 95, no. 3 (2018): 295–304.

[2] Carmel Salhi, Deborah Azrael, Matthew Miller, "Parent and Adolescent Reports of Adolescent Access to Household Firearms in the United States," JAMA Network Open, (2021).

[3] Frances Baxley and Matthew Miller, "Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms," Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine 160, no. 5 (2006): 542-547.

Household guns, often the most easily accessible firearms for youth, are a major source of weapons used in school shootings, youth suicides, and unintentional shooting deaths among children.

Studies show that between 70 and 90% of guns used in youth suicides, unintentional shootings among children, and school shootings perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18 are acquired from the home or the homes of relatives or friends.[4]

Several studies have shown that the risk of suicide and unintentional shootings among youth increases in homes where guns are kept loaded and/or unlocked.[5]

Safe firearm storage helps prevent gun deaths and injuries in children, and research suggests that CAP and safe storage laws increase safe storage behavior. This makes these laws incredibly effective at preventing gun deaths and injuries among children and teens.

Estimates suggest that even modest increases in the number of American homes safely storing firearms could prevent almost a third of youth gun deaths due to suicide and unintentional firearm injury.[6]

Numerous studies over the past 20 years have found that child access prevention laws can reduce suicide and unintentional gun deaths and injuries among children and teens by up to 54%, with the greatest reductions occurring in states which require safe storage of firearms.[7]

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[4] Renee M. Johnson, et al., "Who Are the Owners of Firearms Used in Adolescent Suicides?," Suicide and Life-threatening Behavior 40, no. 6 (2010): 609-611; Guohua Li, et al., "Factors Associated with the Intent of Firearm-related Injuries in Pediatric Trauma Patients," Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine 150, no. 11 (1996): 1160-1165; John Woodrow Cox and Steven Rich, ""The Gun is Not in the Closet,'" The Washington Post, August 1, 2018,https://wapo.st/2M2HSH6. See also, Bryan Vossekuil, et al., "The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States," US Secret Service and US Department of Education, July 2004,https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/preventingattacksreport.pdf; Tawnell D. Hobbs, "Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home," The Wall Street Journal, April 5, 2018,https://on.wsj.com/2Eydv2f.

[5] David C. Grossman, et al., "Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries," JAMA 293, no. 6 (2005): 707–714. See also, Matthew Miller and David Hemenway, "The Relationship Between Firearms and Suicide: a Review of the Literature," Aggression and Violent Behavior 4, no. 1 (1999): 59–75; Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, "Association Between Youth–focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides," JAMA 292, no. 5 (2004): 594–601.

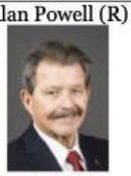
[6] Michael C. Monuteaux, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage With Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among US Youths," JAMA Pediatrics (2019).

[7] Emma C. Hamilton, et al., "Variability of Child Access Prevention Laws and Pediatric Firearm Injuries," Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery 84, no. 4 (2018): 613–619. See also, Peter Cummings, David C. Grossman, Frederick P. Rivara, and Thomas D. Koepsell, "State Gun Safe Storage Laws and Child Mortality Due to Firearms," JAMA 278, no. 13 (1997): 1084–1086; Daniel W. Webster, Jon S. Vernick, April M. Zeoli, and Jennifer A. Manganello, "Association Between Youth–focused Firearm Laws and Youth Suicides," JAMA 292, no. 5 (2004): 594–601; Jeffrey DeSimone, Sara Markowitz, and Jing Xu, "Child Access Prevention Laws and Nonfatal Gun Injuries," Southern Economic Journal 80, no. 1 (2013): 5–25.

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HB 1 Bill language

25 LC 56 0217

House Bill 1

By: Representative Au of the 50th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Part 3 of Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to carrying and possession of firearms, so as to establish the offense of making a firearm accessible to a child; to provide for definitions; to provide for exceptions and affirmative defenses; to provide for criminal penalties; to require a notice by certain firearm dealers; to provide for a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Pediatric Health Safe Storage Act."

SECTION 2.

Part 3 of Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to carrying and possession of firearms, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"16-11-132.1.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) 'Child' means a person younger than 18 years of age.

(2) 'Dealer' shall have the same meaning as provided for under Code Section 16-11-171.

(3) 'Family' means a parent, grandparent, or sibling.

(4) 'Readily dischargeable firearm' means a firearm that is loaded with ammunition, whether or not a round is in the chamber.

(5) 'Secure' means to take steps that a reasonable person would believe sufficient to prevent the access to a readily dischargeable firearm by a child, including, but not limited to, placing a firearm in a locked container or temporarily rendering the firearm inoperable by a trigger lock or other means.

(b) Except where possession of a firearm by a child is lawful under Code Section 16-11-132, a person commits the offense of making a firearm accessible to a child if such child gains access to a readily dischargeable firearm, and the person with criminal negligence:

(1) Failed to secure the firearm; or

(2) Left the firearm in a place to which the person knew or should have known the child could gain access.

(c) It shall be an affirmative defense to prosecution under this Code section that the child's access to the firearm:

(1) Was supervised by a person older than 18 years of age and was for hunting, sporting, or other lawful purposes;

(2) Consisted of lawful defense by the child of people or property; or

(3) Was gained by entering property in violation of the law.

(d)(1) Except as provided under paragraph (2) of this subsection, a person convicted pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) A person convicted pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section where the child discharges the firearm and causes death or serious bodily injury to himself or herself or another person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

(3) No person who commits a violation of subsection (b) of this Code section shall be arrested before the seventh day after the date on which the offense was committed if:

(A) Such person is family of the child who discharged the firearm; and

(B) The child, in discharging the firearm, caused the death of or serious injury to such child.

(e)(1) A dealer shall post in a conspicuous position on the premises where the dealer conducts business a sign that contains the following warning in block letters not less than one inch in height:

'IT IS UNLAWFUL TO STORE, TRANSPORT, OR ABANDON AN UNSECURED FIREARM IN A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN CAN OBTAIN ACCESS TO THE FIREARM.'

(2) A person convicted pursuant to subsection (e) of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.