

March 17, 2024
St. Paul

To: Senate Judiciary and Public Safety
Nicole Kaplan – administrator

Dear members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SF 4312 and SF 606. These bills are necessary to mitigate the ongoing violence which impacts children and teens in Minnesota.

The data documenting gun violence are overwhelming. I believe the following are compelling:

- The CDC has reported that firearms are the leading cause of death of children ages 1-19 in the US
- A study reported in JAMA stated that states with secure storage measures have 78% lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injury and 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries in children and teens
- In addition to death and injury due to firearms the economic cost of this violence is staggering, by one Everytown measure over \$500B annually!

Young people and students are demanding support for stricter gun laws.

These bills do not take away rights, in my view, but support reform that the majority of gun owners support. In fact, these bills will lead to improved safety and better perception of gun owners. Gun rights advocates and lobbyists offer *nothing* to address gun violence, only a stance against any gun safety measures; this sort of inaction is unacceptable. We cannot accept the “both-sides-ism” of positioning on this debate – the majority of Minnesotans want effective legislation to reduce the impact of gun violence. And, our fellow Minnesotans want action NOW, not further delay of this needed legislation.

Thanks for all you do to lead Minnesota to be an example of responsible gun ownership and improved public safety.

Regards,
Pete Steinhagen
St. Paul, MN