

Minnesota Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee
Chair: Senator Ron Latz

SF 0606

Friday March 22, 2024 at 9:00 AM
1200 Minnesota Senate Building

IN SUPPORT

Dear Chair Latz and members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

As a family physician and lifelong Minnesotan, I am testifying in support of Senate File 0606, creating a requirement that gun owners alert law enforcement if their firearms are ever lost and stolen. Lost and stolen firearms are often used in crimes or end up in the hands of those who mean to harm themselves or others.

Gun thefts occur in staggering numbers. Approximately 380,000 guns are stolen annually from private gun owners¹, and gun thefts often result in the diversion of guns into the illegal market where people with dangerous histories often obtain firearms. Laws that require reporting of lost or stolen firearms are associated with significant reductions in gun trafficking. One study found that these laws reduced traced illegal gun movement by 46% compared to states that do not have such laws.² Another study found that mandatory-reporting laws were associated with a 30 percent lower risk that guns would be purchased in that state and recovered after a crime in another state.³

Minnesota needs a requirement to report lost or stolen firearms in order to help stem the problem of straw purchasing. Without the available excuse of claiming a firearm was lost or stolen, people who knowingly purchase firearms with the intent to give or sell them to prohibited purchasers will be able to be held more accountable and hopefully dissuaded from participating in straw purchasing in the first place.

Minnesota legislators should pass SF0606 in an effort to aid law enforcement in their quest to reduce illegal gun trafficking.

Please vote yes on SF 0606.

Thank you for your work to make our state a safe place to live and raise the next generation of Minnesotans.

Emily Benzie, MD
St. Paul, MN

¹ Hemenway D., Azrael D., & Miller M. "Whose guns are stolen? The epidemiology of Gun theft victims". *Injury Epidemiology*. (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-017-0109-8>

² Kahane, L. "Understanding the Interstate Export of Crime Guns: A Gravity Model Approach." *Contemporary Economic Policy*. (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-7287.2012.00324.x>

³ Webster, DW, Vernick JS, McGinty EE, Alcorn T. Preventing the diversion of guns to criminals through effective firearm sales laws. 2013; Webster DW, Vernick JS. Reducing gun violence in America: Informing policy with evidence and analysis. Baltimore, Maryland. *The Johns Hopkins University Press*. 2013; 109-121.