



Testimony in Support of S.F. 3564 (Rest), Sales tax exemption for firearm safety devices
Senate Taxes
February 21, 2024

Dear Chair Rest and Members of the Senate Taxes Committee,

We write in support of S.F. 3564 (Rest), a bill to make gun safety devices tax exempt. We applaud this effort as a common-sense piece of legislation focused on preventing common and avoidable types of gun deaths and that can help overcome polarization around questions of gun violence.

Accidental gun deaths are horrific and are unfortunately all too common. The statistics below show a snapshot of the impact and damage of these potentially preventable injuries and deaths:

- Thirty-seven percent of the gunshot injuries in the United States are from accidental shootings.¹
- In 2019, there were 486 unintentional gun deaths in the United States, around 1.2 percent of all gun deaths.² In 2021, that number was 549.
- From 2009 to 2018, there were 279 cases in which a child under 15 died due to an accidental firearm injury.³
 - Among the children under age 15 who accidentally killed themselves or another child with a gunshot, most occurred in the victim's home, and in 80 percent of the cases, the gun belonged to an older relative.
 - In over 40 percent of these deaths of kids under 15, the children were between the ages of two and four.

The proposed tax incentive is an easy, low-cost way to encourage people to procure gun safety devices and perhaps prevent a few of these tragic deaths or injuries. We would also note that firearms account for roughly half of all suicides, and the imposition of safety devices on firearms in the home could make an impact on the number of gun-related suicides in Minnesota. We urge you to pass S.F. 3564 and protect Minnesotans.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maggee Hangge
Policy Associate, Minnesota Catholic Conference

¹ <https://www.thetrace.org/2022/12/accidental-shootings-cdc-data-children/>

² <https://efsgv.org/learn/type-of-gun-violence/unintentional-shootings/>

³ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/06/26/health/children-accidental-shootings/index.html>