



Dr. Ted C. Bonar, Psy.D., Director of End Family Fire at Brady  
Before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution  
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Chairman Blumenthal, Ranking Member Cruz, and Distinguished Members of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution,

Founded in 1974, Brady works across Congress, courts, and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike, to take action, not sides, and end America's gun violence epidemic. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Jim and his wife, Sarah, led the fight to pass federal legislation requiring background checks for gun sales. Brady continues to uphold Jim and Sarah's legacy by uniting Americans from coast to coast, red and blue, young and old, liberal and conservative, to combat the epidemic of gun violence.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony before this Subcommittee today on the importance of safe storage and suicide prevention. I've worked directly with the military-connected community throughout my professional career. I completed my training at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago. I have held clinical positions at three universities where I worked with veterans on campus. I have worked directly with service members, veterans, and their families as a Subject Matter Expert with PsychArmor, and the Center for Deployment Psychology. I have spoken at over 200 university and civilian training events where I provided advanced training to mental health professionals seeking to better serve the military-connected community.

I have worked as a professional mental health provider and advocate with and for service members, veterans, and their friends and families since 2005. As a civilian without military experience, I am committed to narrowing the military-civilian divide, and I have been honored and humbled to work closely with many in the military-connected community.

I am currently the Director of End Family Fire with Brady. Recognizing that the safe storage of firearms in the home could save countless lives per day, Brady launched End Family Fire in 2018, a campaign in partnership with the Ad Council, that speaks directly to gun owners about the safe storage of firearms. Family fire is a shooting involving an improperly stored or misused gun found in the home, resulting in death or injury. Unintentional shootings, suicides, and intentional shootings are all forms of family fire.

Suicide represents over 60 percent of all gun deaths. In 2019, there were a total of 41,935 suicides in the United States, and 21,709 — over 51 percent — were firearm suicides. Firearm suicides have accounted for about half of all suicide deaths for many years, with the number of firearm suicides reaching roughly 24,000 per year prior to 2019. Over the last five years, an average of 64 Americans have died by firearm suicide each day.<sup>1</sup> An average of eight children and teens (between the ages of one and 17) sustain unintentional gunshot wounds today, tomorrow, and every single day due to family fire.<sup>2</sup> Among children, the majority unintentional shooting deaths occur in the home.<sup>3</sup>

This written testimony will examine suicide, including service member and veteran, as well as youth suicide, unintentional shootings, the safe storage of firearms, and public education strategies shown to be effective in the prevention of injury or death by firearm.

### **Suicide and Firearms:**

While the public health problem of suicide is multifactorial, there is one variable that stands above all others as a determinant to a death by suicide in the United States — the use of a firearm. When firearms are used in a suicide attempt, the result is death about 90 percent of the time.<sup>4</sup> Simply stated, we can effectively reduce the number of suicides in the United States through strategies that expand and strengthen the practice of safe storage of firearms.

There are four important points about suicide and firearms critical to understand:

First: There is a common belief that the majority of people who die by suicide take action impulsively. Most people who attempt suicide have thought about the plan and action well-ahead of time. Their moment of decision comes after experiencing intense psychological pain and the deep desire to be free of that pain. However, most suicide attempts occur within less than an hour of the decision to make an attempt,<sup>5</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and States, 1999 to 2019.

<sup>2</sup> “Key Statistics.” Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. Accessed May 21, 2021. <https://www.bradyunited.org/key-statistics>.

<sup>3</sup> Li, Guohua. “Factors Associated With the Intent of Firearm-Related Injuries in Pediatric Trauma Patients.” *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 150, no. 11 (1996): 1160. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.1996.02170360050008>.

<sup>4</sup> Conner, Andrew, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller. “Suicide Case-Fatality Rates in the United States, 2007 to 2014.” *Annals of Internal Medicine* 171, no. 12 (2019): 885. <https://doi.org/10.7326/m19-1324>.

<sup>5</sup> Deisenhammer, Eberhard A., Chy-Meng Ing, Robert Strauss, Georg Kemmler, Hartmann Hinterhuber, and Elisabeth M. Weiss. “The Duration of the Suicidal Process: How Much Time Is Left for Intervention Between Consideration and Accomplishment of a Suicide Attempt?” *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 70, no. 1 (2008): 19–24. <https://doi.org/10.4088/jcp.07m03904>.

25 percent of individuals who attempt suicide make an attempt within five minutes of deciding to end their lives.<sup>6</sup> While the decision to act can be made quickly, decision differs from impulse. To suggest that suicide is impulsive is to suggest that there is nothing we can do to plan, intervene, or prevent a suicide attempt. This is false.

Second: Firearms are the method of suicide that results in death far more often than any other lethal means. The use of a gun in a suicide attempt results in death 90 percent of the time, compared to less than two percent of intentional drug poisoning attempts, which is, by far, the most common attempt method.<sup>7</sup> Simply and bluntly, when used during a suicide attempt, guns are effective in almost every case.

Epidemiological studies directly link access to firearms to higher suicide rates. States with the highest rates of household firearm ownership have higher rates of suicide overall than states with the lowest household firearm ownership rates, even though rates of non-firearm suicide are comparable across these states.<sup>8</sup> A recent study identified handgun acquisitions and deaths in a cohort of 26.3 million residents of California over the age of 21 and found that the rate of suicide among male handgun owners was three times higher than non-owners and the rate of suicide among female handgun owners was seven times as high as non-owners.<sup>9</sup> The elevated rates of suicide among these handgun owners was driven by much higher rates of gun suicide, not of higher rates of suicide by other methods. Research in this area indicates that “gun ownership and unsafe gun storage likely do not initiate risk, but may amplify existing risk.”<sup>10</sup>

Third: When a person is at risk for suicide, we want to create as much time and distance between them and the method as possible. While moments of crisis are extremely dangerous, they are often temporary. If a firearm is safely stored, it is less likely to be used during a moment of urgent — but temporary — distress. The availability and effectiveness of firearms greatly increases the risk of a fatal outcome, should someone attempt suicide.<sup>11</sup> The majority of those who survive a suicide attempt — 70 percent — do not make another attempt to end their life.<sup>12</sup> Putting barriers in place between a person thinking of suicide and their preferred method of suicide can delay or prevent a suicide attempt altogether. Storing firearms locked

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<sup>6</sup> Simon, Thomas R., Alan C. Swann, Kenneth E. Powell, Lloyd B. Potter, Marcie-Jo Kresnow, and Patrick W. Ocarroll. “Characteristics of Impulsive Suicide Attempts and Attempters.” *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 32 (2002): 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.32.1.5.49.24212>.

<sup>7</sup> Conner, Andrew, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller. “Suicide Case-Fatality Rates in the United States, 2007 to 2014.” *Annals of Internal Medicine* 171, no. 12 (2019): 885. <https://doi.org/10.7326/m19-1324>.

<sup>8</sup> Miller, Matthew, Steven J. Lippmann, Deborah Azrael, and David Hemenway. “Household Firearm Ownership and Rates of Suicide Across the 50 United States.” *The Journal of Trauma: Injury, Infection, and Critical Care* 62, no. 4 (2007): 1029–35. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.ta.0000198214.24056.40>.

<sup>9</sup> Studdert, David M., Yifan Zhang, Sonja A. Swanson, Lea Prince, Jonathan A. Rodden, Erin E. Holsinger, Matthew J. Spittal, Garen J. Wintemute, and Matthew Miller. “Handgun Ownership and Suicide in California.” *New England Journal of Medicine* 382, no. 23 (2020): 2220–29. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmsa1916744>.

<sup>10</sup> Anestis, Michael D., and Daniel W. Capron. “Deadly Experience: The Association Between Firing a Gun and Various Aspects of Suicide Risk.” *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 48, no. 6 (2018): 700. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12381>

<sup>11</sup> Drexler, Madeline. “Guns and Suicide: The Hidden Toll.” *Harvard Public Health*, [https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine\\_article/guns-suicide/](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine_article/guns-suicide/).

<sup>12</sup> “Attempters’ Long Term Survival.” Means Matter. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, January 9, 2013. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/survival/>.

and unloaded, with ammunition stored separately, can thus be an effective measure to reduce the risk of suicide.<sup>13</sup>

There are countless methods of safe storage of firearms that respect the rights of firearm owners and decrease the likelihood that a firearm might be used in a suicide attempt.

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly: There is a belief that if someone wants to die, they will end their life through any method possible. This is the idea of “means substitution,” which implies that methods of suicide are interchangeable. The scientific and lived-experience research clearly demonstrates that means for suicide are rarely substituted by those considering a suicide attempt. The method a person chooses to attempt suicide generally has purpose and reason for the individual. For example, for those with experience in the military or law enforcement, or the many owners of firearms in this country, the lethality of guns is not an abstract concept. For a person from one of these groups to choose a firearm as a method for suicide is an informed decision. If a firearm is chosen, it is not easily substituted.

### **Service Members and Veterans Unique Risk of Suicide:**

Some communities are uniquely at risk of increased suicide attempts and death by suicide. The military-connected community, including all service members and veterans, is one such group. While only about 7 percent of the U.S. adult population,<sup>14</sup> veterans account for 18 percent of the nation’s gun suicide deaths.<sup>15</sup> Female veterans have an even higher rate – more than twice that of their civilian counterparts, and nearly half of all women veterans who died by suicide use a firearm, compared to just over a quarter of civilian women.<sup>16</sup> Service members and veterans are more likely than their civilian counterparts to have access to firearms, and they possess the knowledge and training in how to use them. Nearly half of all veterans own at least one firearm,<sup>17</sup> while about one-third of U.S. adults own a firearm.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Shenassa ED, Rogers ML, Spalding KL, Roberts MB. “Safer Storage of Firearms At Home and Risk of Suicide: A Study of Protective Factors in a Nationally Representative Sample,” *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. 2004; 58(10):841-848.

<sup>14</sup> “Those Who Served: America's Veterans From World War II to the War on Terror.” United States Census Bureau, May 26, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/content/census/en/library/publications/2020/demo/acs-43.html>.

<sup>15</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and States, 1999 to 2019; “VA Releases 2020 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report.” [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, November 12, 2020. <https://www.va.gov/OPA/PRESSREL/pressrelease.cfm?id=5565>.

<sup>16</sup> “Suicide Among Women Veterans: Facts, Prevention Strategies, and Resources April 2019 .” U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, April 2019. [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/docs/Women\\_Veterans\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_508.pdf](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Women_Veterans_Fact_Sheet_508.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Cleveland, Emily C., Deborah Azrael, Joseph A. Simonetti, and Matthew Miller. “Firearm Ownership among American Veterans: Findings from the 2015 National Firearm Survey.” *Injury Epidemiology* 4, no. 1 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-017-0130-y>.

<sup>18</sup> Saad, Lydia. “What Percentage of Americans Own Guns?” Gallup, April 3, 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/264932/percentage-americans-own-guns.aspx>.

Firearms are used in 68 percent of veteran suicides compared to 48 percent of non-veteran suicides.<sup>19</sup> Among military service members, firearms were used in 60 percent of suicides among the Active Component, 66 percent of suicides among the Reserve, and 79 percent among the National Guard.<sup>20</sup> A 2019 study of active-duty military personnel revealed that military personnel with recent thoughts about death or self-harm were much less likely to store their firearms locked and unloaded than non-suicidal service members.<sup>21</sup>

Military-connected individuals have a unique relationship with weapons. Firearm training is foundational within the experience and culture of our armed forces. Safety is considered a value in these training sessions, as mission security and task completion are non-negotiable. The lethality of weapons is not an abstract concept for this community. Individuals from this culture may have relied upon weapons for survival while serving. If they did not personally experience firearms as tools for survival (e.g. from personal experience in combat), they certainly know people who have, and are each aware that they might have been called for this responsibility. Military experience and firearms cannot be separated.

Transition from military to civilian life, therefore, does not always include the separation of veterans from weapons. Many veterans see firearms as more than a lethal tool that is needed for protection, safety, and survival; firearms can be an aspect of a person's identity. Within some communities, firearm ownership is expected. And, indeed, the Oath of Enlistment begins with a sworn oath to "...support, and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies..."<sup>22</sup> Owning a firearm following service may therefore be understood as a direct extension of this oath by veterans.

A military-connected individual's experience, values, and identity is entirely consistent with the understanding that, when used, firearms are lethal weapons. When used during a suicide attempt, they are effective. Service-members and veterans use firearms during suicide attempts more often than non-military-connected people. The rates of suicide by firearm among all military-connected people are higher than in non-military individuals. Increased safe storage practices for military-connected individuals is consistent with safety, security, identity, and the Constitutional rights for which these individuals served our country.

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<sup>19</sup> "VA Releases 2020 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report." [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, November 12, 2020. <https://www.va.gov/OPA/PRESSREL/pressrelease.cfm?id=5565>.

<sup>20</sup> "Department of Defense Releases Second Annual Suicide Report." U.S. Department of Defense, October 1, 2020. <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/2367917/department-of-defense-releases-second-annual-suicide-report/>.

<sup>21</sup> Bryan, Craig J., Annabelle O. Bryan, Michael D. Anestis, Lauren R. Khazem, Julia A. Harris, Alexis M. May, and Cynthia Thomsen. "Firearm Availability and Storage Practices Among Military Personnel Who Have Thought About Suicide." *JAMA Network Open* 2, no. 8 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.9160>.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Army Center of Military History. "Oaths of Enlistment and Oath of Office." U.S. Army Center of Military History, Accessed May 24, 2021. <https://history.army.mil/html/faq/oaths.html>.

## Suicide Risk Among Youth:

Over the past decade, the rate of firearm suicide among children under the age of 18 has been increasing.<sup>23</sup> Results from recent research on Americans between the ages of 10 and 24 show that after 2008, instances of non-fatal self-inflicted injuries among this group increased almost 6 percent per year.<sup>24</sup> In 2019, 1,646 children died by suicide, and firearms were the method used in about 40 percent of those reported deaths. Almost 4.6 million minors, or, about 7 percent of all U.S. children, live in homes with at least one firearm that is stored both loaded and unlocked.<sup>25</sup> In one state-level analysis controlling for the prevalence of youth suicide attempts, researchers found that the youth suicide rate increased by 26.9 percent for each 10 percentage-point increase in household gun ownership.<sup>26</sup>

A study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2018 found that within a sample of parents who owned guns, only one-third stored all household firearms locked and unloaded,<sup>27</sup> indicating that two-thirds of parents who own guns could increase the time and distance between a youth thinking of suicide and a suicide attempt by firearm through enhancing their safe storage practices.

Most firearm owners indicate that safety and protection of family is a primary reason for gun ownership. The knowledge of firearms and the lethality of weapons is considered the reason that guns are the preferred method of family protection. While the purpose of owning a firearm is oftentimes for protection, gun owners generally attribute the risk of suicide in the home as a low-probability event, even though at the population level it is, on average, more likely to occur than self-defensive gun use. A University of Washington study in King County, Washington, found that between the years of 2011-2018, for every case of killing in self-defense involving a firearm kept in the home there were 37 suicides involving firearms.<sup>28</sup> While suicide is indeed a low-probability event from an epidemiological standpoint, it is a higher-probability event for firearm owners than non-firearm owners, simply due to the effectiveness of firearms when used in a suicide attempt. Increased safe storage practices that align with the values of safety and security of gun owners are consistent with the purpose for which a firearm is valued, and remain consistent with Constitutional rights.

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<sup>23</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and States, 1999 to 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Mercado, Melissa C., Kristin Holland, Ruth W. Leemis, Deborah M. Stone, and Jing Wang. "Trends in Emergency Department Visits for Nonfatal Self-Inflicted Injuries Among Youth Aged 10 to 24 Years in the United States, 2001-2015." *JAMA* 318, no. 19 (2017): 1931. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2017.13317>.

<sup>25</sup> Deborah Azrael, et al. "Firearm Storage in Gun-Owning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey," *Journal of Urban Health* 95 (2018), available at [www.doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7](http://www.doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7).

<sup>26</sup> Knopov, A., Sherman, R. J., Raifman, J. R., Larson, E., & Siegel, M. B. (2019). Household gun ownership and youth suicide rates at the state level, 2005–2015. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 56(3), 335-342.

<sup>27</sup> John Scott, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, "Firearm Storage in Homes With Children With Self-Harm Risk Factors," *American Academy of Pediatrics* (February 2018), <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2018/02/19/peds.2017-2600.info>.

<sup>28</sup> Butler, E. K., Boveng, H. M., Harruff, R. C., Duchin, J. S., Vavilala, M. S., Rivara, F. P., & Rowhani-Rahbar, A. (2020). Risk of Suicide, Homicide, and Unintentional Firearm Deaths in the Home. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 180(6), 909. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.0806>

## Unintentional Shootings:

Many people believe that teaching children about gun safety is sufficient to prevent them from handling firearms. Data indicates, however, that safety training alone is an insufficient intervention to prevent unintentional shootings. A systematic review of the data on school and community-based gun safety programs for children between the ages of 3 and 18 showed that firearm education programs are not always effective in preventing kids from handling firearms in an unsupervised situation.<sup>29</sup> Researchers caution that while firearm safety education has value, people should not rely solely on teaching these skills and should not assume that children will avoid handling firearms simply because they have been warned not to.<sup>30</sup>

Survey data published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* shows that in homes where a gun was stored unlocked, 45 percent of children reported that they could access a loaded firearm in less than five minutes.<sup>31</sup> This number was significantly lower in homes where all guns were stored locked, in which only 24 percent of children reported they were able to access a loaded firearm within five minutes. This research also revealed that 33 percent of gun-owning parents who thought their child could not access a household firearm had a child who reported they could.<sup>32</sup> Other research from a family practice clinic in rural Alabama found that over 70 percent of children who lived in homes with guns knew the storage location of the household firearm and that 1 in 5 parents who reported that their child had never handled the gun were contradicted by their child's report.<sup>33</sup>

Unintentional shootings that involve minors are preventable. Safe storage of firearms, where all firearms are stored locked, unloaded, with ammunition stored separately, is a primary strategy to reduce unintentional injury or death of a child.<sup>34</sup> These are strategies directly in line with the values of gun owners who place protection of family above all other reasons to own firearms, and also inherently respect all individual's Constitutional rights.

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<sup>29</sup> Holly, Cheryl, Sallie Porter, Mary Kamienski, and Aubrianne Lim. "School-Based and Community-Based Gun Safety Educational Strategies for Injury Prevention." *Health Promotion Practice* 20, no. 1 (2018): 38–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839918774571>.

<sup>30</sup> "Gun Safety Programs Do Not Prevent Children from Handling Firearms." *ScienceDaily*, May 15, 2018. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/05/180515113601.htm>.

<sup>31</sup> Salhi, Carmel, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller. "Parent and Adolescent Reports of Adolescent Access to Household Firearms in the United States." *JAMA Network Open* 4, no. 3 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.0989>.

<sup>32</sup> Salhi, Carmel, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller. "Parent and Adolescent Reports of Adolescent Access to Household Firearms in the United States." *JAMA Network Open* 4, no. 3 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.0989>.

<sup>33</sup> Baxley, Frances, and Matthew Miller. "Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms." *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 160, no. 5 (2006): 542. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.160.5.542>.

<sup>34</sup> Grossman, David C. "Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries." *JAMA* 293, no. 6 (2005): 707. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.293.6.707>.

## Safe Firearm Storage: An Effective Preventative Measure:

Safe firearm storage is not only an effective mechanism to prevent unintentional injury or death, but it is also consistent with all Constitutional rights.

About 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. personally owns a firearm,<sup>35</sup> and 63 percent say that personal safety or protection is a reason for their gun ownership.<sup>36</sup> Many safety options are available to firearm owners that allow for quick access to the firearm, when necessary, that concurrently reduce the risk of injury or death. Further, safe operation of firearms is a fundamental value and skill; the entirety of the National Rifle Association's "Handgun 101 - Safe Handling of Firearms" course describes safe operation and storage of guns in detail. Safe storage of firearms is consistent with the culture, value, practice, skill, and Constitutional rights of all gun owners. Consistency with culture and Constitutional rights is evident by the geographic diversity of Child Access Prevention laws, a form of safe storage legislation that seeks to prevent unsupervised access to firearms by minors, enacted in 29 states that include Utah, Texas, and Iowa.<sup>37</sup>

Increasing the accessibility of safe storage devices can help to improve firearm storage practices. An evaluation of a community-based giveaway of gun storage devices indicated that the intervention improved safe firearm storage practices among those who participated.<sup>38</sup> In follow up assessment surveys with participants, a significantly greater proportion reported that they were storing their firearms locked and/or unloaded compared to the baseline assessment.<sup>39</sup> It is estimated that if just 20 percent of households storing at least one gun unlocked changed their storage practices to locking up all their firearms, we could reduce firearm suicide and unintentional firearm fatalities among youth by up to 32 percent.<sup>40</sup> Interventions and strategies that include safe storage devices can help to improve the storage practices of gun owners, thereby reducing the risk of unintentional injury or death by firearm. Congress could also take measures to incentivize safe storage through other means, for instance the Prevent Family Fire Act, which was introduced last Congress, would create tax incentives to promote the sale of safe storage devices.

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<sup>35</sup> Gallup. "Guns." Gallup, Accessed May 21, 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1645/guns.aspx>.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> Rand. "The Effects of Child-Access Prevention Laws." Rand, Accessed May 24, 2021. <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/child-access-prevention.html>

<sup>38</sup> Simonetti, Joseph A, Ali Rowhani-Rahbar, Cassie King, Elizabeth Bennett, and Frederick P Rivara. "Evaluation of a Community-Based Safe Firearm and Ammunition Storage Intervention." *Injury Prevention* 24, no. 3 (2017): 218–23. <https://doi.org/10.1136/injuryprev-2016-042292>.

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> Michael C. Monuteaux et al., "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage with Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Deaths Among U.S. Youths," *JAMAPediatrics* 173 no. 657 (2019)



**Conclusion:**

It is critically important that we talk about these issues. Safe storage has a measurable impact on reducing the rate of suicide, including veteran suicide and youth suicide, and in preventing unintentional shootings that result in the injury or death of children. Laws around safe storage have been upheld by the courts nationwide and the research is conclusive: safe storage saves lives.

Respectfully submitted,

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