



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Robert Craven
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

2024-HB 7373 SUPPORT

March 13, 2024

Dear Chairperson Craven:

The Rhode Island Medical Society thanks Representative Justine Caldwell for introducing H 7373 An Act Relating To Criminal Offenses – Weapons. This bill requires safe storage of firearms/provides civil and criminal penalties for violations/adds rifles and shotguns to the types of firearms requiring a trigger lock to be included with purchase/requires firearms dealers post signs regarding safe storage.

The Rhode Island Medical Society is in strong support of the proposed legislation to require all firearms to be securely stored whenever they are not being used or carried by their owner. This vital measure will significantly enhance public safety and protect Rhode Island's residents, particularly our children and vulnerable populations.

Studies consistently demonstrate the urgent need for safe firearm storage practices to prevent tragic incidents of suicide, homicide, and unintentional injuries. The accessibility of firearms significantly increases the risk of suicide and homicide victimization among household members, particularly children and adolescents. The American Academy of Pediatrics underscores the importance of removing firearms from environments where children live and play or ensuring that they are securely stored to prevent accidents and tragedies.

We urge the committee to prioritize public safety and support the legislation mandating safe storage of firearms. By enacting these measures, we can prevent needless injuries, save lives, and create a safer environment for all Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. If you require any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith, MD, MPH
President