



League of Women Voters of Alaska
Resolution

Requiring Secure Storage of Firearms in Alaska

Adopted January 10, 2022

WHEREAS, gun violence (which includes gun suicides and unintentional shootings) is a public health crisis in the United States and in Alaska;

WHEREAS, the state of Alaska can benefit from a public health approach to the prevention of injury and deaths caused by firearms;

WHEREAS, Alaska has the highest rate of gun deaths in the country, the highest rate of gun suicide among young people¹, and the third highest rate of gun suicide overall;²

WHEREAS, firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens in Alaska (ages 0-19);³

WHEREAS, an average of 22 children and teens in Alaska die by firearms every year, and 61% of those deaths are gun suicides;⁴

WHEREAS, nearly half (48.9%) of high school students (grades 9-12) in Alaska in 2019 reported they could access a loaded firearm, and one in four high school students (25.3%) in Alaska in 2019 reported they had seriously considered suicide in the past year;⁵

WHEREAS, every year, nearly 350 children in the United States gain access to a firearm and unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else, and Alaska has the second-highest rate of injuries and death resulting from unintentional shootings by children;⁶

¹ Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund. "[The Rise of Firearm Suicide Among Young Americans](#)", (2021).

² Unless otherwise noted, data are from [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) WISQARS](#), Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, (age-adjusted death rates per 100,000 for years 2015-2019).

³ CDC Underlying Cause of Death, One-Year Count: 2019.

⁴ CDC Underlying Cause of Death, Five-Year Average: 2015-2019.

⁵ Alaska Division of Public Health, [2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Statewide Traditional High School Results](#).

⁶ Everytown for Gun Safety. "[Preventable Tragedies: Findings From #NotAnAccident Index](#)", (2021).

WHEREAS, requiring the secure storage of firearms reduces the incidence of gun suicides, unintentional shootings, and gun violence, particularly involving young people;⁷ and

WHEREAS, in Alaska, there is currently no requirement that gun owners securely store their firearms;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the League of Women Voters of Alaska supports reasonable firearm policies to reduce injuries and deaths by firearms, including policies that recognize the importance of secure storage of firearms; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League of Women Voters of Alaska supports House Bill 203, the Alaska Secure Storage of Firearms Act, or similar legislation requiring gun owners in Alaska to securely store firearms in a locked container, with a gun lock, or by other means to render the firearm inaccessible or unable to be used by a person who is not the owner or an authorized person.

⁷ Michael C. Monuteaux, Deborah Azrael, and Matthew Miller, "Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage with Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among US Youths," *Journal of American Medical Association Pediatrics* 173, no. 7 (2019): 657-662. (edited)