



CEASEFIRE oregon
Reason. Educate. Legislate.

April 16, 2015

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski, Chair Senate Judiciary Committee
Salem, Oregon

Penny Okamoto
Executive Director
Ceasefire Oregon
Portland, Oregon

Re: Ceasefire Oregon supports SB 945

Dear Chair Prozanski and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

On February 29, 2000, six-year-old Kayla Rolland was shot to death by her first-grade classmate in their Flint, Michigan school. The boy who shot her to death found his uncle's unsecured gun at the home shared by the boy's family and uncle. At the time of her death, Kayla Rolland was the youngest victim of a school shooting in the United States.

Kayla's death is particularly significant to me because it was the shooting that made me begin to look at gun violence in the United States.

I am here today in honor of Kayla Rolland and the thousands of others who have suffered needlessly from the gun violence that is plaguing our country.

While most gun owners are responsible with their firearms, some gun owners fail to follow basic safety rules. For example, if your firearm is not on your person it should be unloaded and stored in a gun safe. If your firearm is on your person, it should be kept under your control at all times. Children should not be allowed to use guns unsupervised.

These common sense, basic safety rules can and do help to reduce firearm deaths. But some gun owners make faulty assumptions. For example, some gun owners assume that their young children will never be able to find the guns hidden in their home. Or they assume that teenagers know how to handle firearms and would never handle a gun in an irresponsible way. Some parents wrongly assume that their teenaged children could never be suicidal.

These tragic assumptions lead to injuries and deaths that are completely avoidable.

Some people will question whether a grieving parent should be prosecuted when a child injures or kills himself with a parent's gun. Perhaps those people believe the injury or death of a child is enough punishment. But what about the families and children who were not related to the gun owner? What about the families of those terrorized in the Reynold's High School shooting? Or the Thurston High School shooting? Or the thousands of other children who were visiting the homes of gun owners when they were unintentionally shot by their friends or playmates? What do you say to the parents whose children went to a playdate and never came home again?

Fifteen years ago, if the gun used to kill Kayla Rolland been secured, she would not have been shot on that horrible day. In the years since her death, many other states have enacted Child Access Prevention laws in order to educate their citizens about safe storage of firearms. It's time for Oregon to do the same. Let's educate our citizens about gun violence prevention and the safe storage of weapons. And let's hold reckless gun owners accountable when they allow children to access guns unsupervised and without permission.

Ceasefire Oregon strongly urges you to support SB 945.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Penny Okamoto
Executive Director
Ceasefire Oregon



SB 945 Child Access Prevention

- The proposed Oregon Child Access Prevention bill would make it a crime to endanger a child by allowing access to an unlocked or unsecured firearm without consent of the child's parent or guardian.
- In addition, the bill would require gun dealers to post notice concerning obligation to prevent minors from accessing firearm without consent of firearm owner or minor's parent or guardian.
- Families who enroll their children in gun safety classes or take their children hunting or target shooting will still be able to do so.
- Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia have already enacted Child Access Prevention laws.¹
- **An estimated 26,000 Oregon children under 18 live in a home with an unlocked firearm.**² Many more children visit and play in homes with unsecured firearms.
- **These children are at a greater risk of unintentional gun violence.** U.S. children aged 5 to 14 are eleven times more likely to be killed unintentionally with a gun than similarly aged children in other developed countries.³
- **Guns poorly stored increase the risk of unintentional gun deaths.**⁴
 - Case studies of unintentional shootings document a high rate of accessible and loaded firearms in homes where the shootings occurred.⁵
 - In nearly half of cases, the shootings occurred in the home of the victim.⁶
 - More than 90% of the time there was no adult present.⁷
- **Guns properly stored reduce unintentional deaths.** Recent studies find that keeping firearms locked and unloaded, and keeping ammunition stored in a locked location separate from firearms, reduced unintentional injury in homes with children and teens.⁸
- **CAP laws have been associated with lower rates of unintentional gun deaths among children.**⁹
 - Studies have found these laws to be effective in reducing accidental shootings of children by as much as 23 percent.¹⁰
 - Among states with the highest levels of child gun deaths, 7 of 10 do not have CAP laws. Among states with low levels of child gun deaths, 7 of 10 do have CAP laws.¹¹
 - Alaska and Louisiana--states ranked highest in the level of gun violence, with weak gun laws and no CAP laws--had the highest number of children killed by guns from 2001 through 2010: 4 to 5 deaths for every 100,000 children.
 - By contrast, 26 states with CAP laws had rates of less than 2 child firearm deaths for every 100,000 children over this same period.¹²
- **In 12 states where child access prevention laws had been in effect for at least one year, unintentional deaths fell by 23% from 1990-94 among children under 15 years of age.**¹³
- Keeping firearms locked and unloaded and storing ammunition in a locked location separate from firearms serve as protective measures that reduce youth suicide and unintentional injury in homes with children and teenagers where guns are stored.¹⁴

1. Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Child Access Prevention Summary, <http://smartgunlaws.org/child-access-prevention-policy-summary/>, 28 states and D.C. have CAP laws: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Wisconsin.
2. *The Truth About Kids & Guns*, Brady Campaign to End Gun Violence, p. 20, Oct. 2014.
<http://www.bradiycampaign.org/the-truth-about-kids-guns>
3. Richardson EG, Hemenway D. Homicide, Suicide, and Unintentional firearm fatality: Comparing the United States with Other High-Income Countries, 2003, p. 13, table 2, *J Trauma*. 2011 Jan;70(1):238-43. doi 10.1097/TA.0b013e3181dbaddf.
4. Miller M, Azrael D, Hemenway D. Firearms and Violent Death in the United States, *Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*, Webster DW, Vernick JS, ed. 2013, p. 13
5. Wintemute, GJ, Teret SP et al, When Children Shoot Children: 88 Unintended Deaths in California, *JAMA* 1987; 257:3107-3109
6. Grossman DC, Reay DT, Baker SA. Self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and adolescents. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 1999; 153(8): 875-878
7. Ibid
8. Grossman, D C. et al, Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries, 293 *JAMA* 707, 711-13 (2005)
9. Regulating Guns in America (see above) p. 233
10. Hepburn L, Azrael D et al. The Effects of Child Access Prevention Laws on Unintentional Child Firearm fatalities, 1979-2000. *Trauma* 2006; 61:423-8; See also The Case for Gun Policy Reforms in America, *Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research*, 2012, p. 8.
11. States with highest level of child gun violence are Louisiana, Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Mississippi, South Carolina, New Mexico, Missouri, Arkansas, Georgia. Mississippi, Missouri and Georgia have CAP laws. States with the lowest level of violence are Hawaii, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Iowa, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Maine, Nebraska. Only New York, Maine, and Nebraska do not have CAP laws. See interactive map at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/civil-liberties/news/2013/04/02/58293/interactive-measuring-gun-violence-across-the-50-states>, Center for American Progress.
12. Gerney A, Parsons C, Posner C, America Under the Gun: A 50 State Analysis of Gun Violence and Its Link to Weak State Laws, Center for American Progress, April 2013, pp. 16-17
13. Peter Cummings et al., *State Gun Safe Storage Laws and Child Mortality Due to Firearms*, 278 *JAMA* 1084, 1084 (Oct. 1997).
14. David C. Grossman et al., *Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries*, 293 *JAMA* 707, 711-13 (Feb. 2005).

Thanks to New Yorkers Against Gun Violence for help in compiling this data.