



MINNESOTA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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Representative Liz Olson, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee

Chair Jamie Becker-Finn, Author HF 4300

April 23, 2024

Dear Members of the House of Representatives,

The Minnesota Sheriffs' Association wishes to formally express our opposition to HF 4300, pertaining to the Negligent Storage of Firearms. While we acknowledge the author's intentions to enhance firearm safety, we believe this proposed legislation is overly broad and could yield unintended repercussions.

We empathize with the author's concerns regarding reducing unauthorized access to firearms and prioritizing the safety of all Minnesota residents, particularly children. However, we contend that the proposed bill lacks the necessary nuance to achieve these goals effectively. Creating a criminal offense for firearm ownership without secure storage, even in situations where children or ineligible persons are not present, fails to strike a balance between safety and individual rights. The potential scenarios where this provision could apply are myriad and may disproportionately affect law-abiding citizens.

Furthermore, the prescribed penalties outlined in the bill appear disproportionate to the alleged offense of negligent storage. Imposing severe penalties on individuals who may have unintentionally violated storage protocols, or who have encountered extenuating circumstances, is unjust and counterproductive to fostering a safer firearm culture.

In summary, the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association stands in opposition to HF 4300 and respectfully urges a reconsideration of its provisions in favor of more balanced and effective approaches to firearm safety.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

James Stuart
Executive Director
Minnesota Sheriffs' Association