



**Many gun locks are so unsafe they have been recalled** (e.g., Master Lock Co. of Milwaukee has recalled about 752,000 gun locks in 2000 and these locks were distributed with Maryland guns in conformance to Maryland safe storage laws.). The Washington Post reported that 30 out of 32 gun locks tested by the federal government could be opened without the key.(see “Safety Standards Sought After Gun Locks Fail Test, Caroline E. Mayer, 2/7/2001, page A1). In fact, these locks could be opened with paper clips, tweezers, or a good wack. **It is so typical of Maryland to mindlessly promulgate safety requirements for firearms with no real understanding of the safety implications.**

**Maryland should be under no illusions – Triggerlocks can kill** (see Memories and tears flow as family buries two children killed by intruder, MIKE CONWAY, BEE STAFF WRITER, August 31, 2000, MERCED -- The video tribute during Wednesday's funeral marked milestones in the all-too-short lives of Ashley Danielle and John William Carpenter ... ). The reference story reports the deaths of two Carpenter children attacked by a madman with a pitchfork in their home. The children were unable to access a firearm to defend themselves because the father had locked it in conformance to California's safe storage laws.

This law makes “one size fits all” type decision and make no provisions at all for: a) varying risk of location – living in some area of Maryland may have higher risk from criminal action than from child access, b) for training by parents of child in handling firearm (might as well say kids can't have sex unless they've passed the school sex-ed class), and the provisions for training by DNR are not adequate unless the training is offered in all public schools on a regular basis. The bill should be amended to provide for that training for all children in Maryland older than 10.

**Locking up firearms can go wrong and should be a personal decision in which the all the risks are evaluated by an adult who has the interests of his family at heart.**

The law may encourage the use of trigger locks on loaded firearms – THAT IS A HAZARD recognized by all who know firearms. Trigger locks fail; loaded firearms with trigger locks may fire accidentally when dropped or when the lock is being installed.

The notion that a firearm is unloaded violates one of the fundamental rules of safe handling. So, to demand the firearm be locked -- hence unloaded if a trigger lock is used, or unloaded without lock – violates the basic safety notion that “**There is no such thing as an unloaded firearm.**”

The exclusion of law enforcement officers makes them a privileged class while putting at risk their children (if you believe that locking guns up will save children). If this bill has any protective effect at all, it is hard to understand why the state government should care so little for the children of people who use guns as LEOs.

Maryland Safe Storage Laws have had no effect. The evidence is clear:

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, (Mailstop K65, 4770 Buford Highway NE, Atlanta, GA 30341-3724) web page <http://webapp.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html> reports for the period 1996 through 1998 (the last year available at that site) that 6 Maryland juveniles were killed unintentionally with firearms. The ages were 1 age 17, 2 age 15, 1 age 13, 1 age 8, and 1 age 3. During the same period, 77 juveniles used firearms in suicide. One was age 10, 5 were age 13, 9 were age 14, 10 were age 15, 16 were age 16, and 36 were age 17.

In the decade earlier similar period of 1986 to 1988, 4 juveniles were unintentionally killed with firearms in Maryland.. During that same period, 40 juveniles used firearms in suicide. Two were age 13, 2 were age 14, 8 were age 15, 13 were age 16, and 15 were age 17 It is hard to argue that much has changed because of the child access law enacted by Maryland in 1992.

Maryland has already passed some strict child access prevention gun laws which have had no discernable effect, but made it a point to publicly reject the NRA's Eddie Eagle gun safety program for their schools. Those steps were wrong headed. Now some want Maryland to compound its folly by increasing penalties for child access prevention failure. We hope this measure is pitched into the trash can where it belongs.

Marylanders Against Handgun Abuse (MAHA) asserted in their testimony in the Maryland Senate on 3/12/02 to support the Senate bill crossfiled to HB969 that “Each year since 1979, unintended deaths caused by firearms has ranged between 1,225 and 2,000 nationwide ...many of these victims being young children.”

Actually, MAHA is using all accidents of all ages including hunting accidents with long guns. Focusing on children age 14 and younger, the number MAHA provides is too large by a factor of approximately 6 for United States. In Maryland for children age 14 and younger there have been 15 deaths total in 18 years from all firearm accidents (hunting, long gun, handgun – ALL).

Comparing the table on the right, we see firearms average 0.8% of unintentional deaths in Maryland over the 18 year span.

1981 - 1998, United States Unintentional Firearm Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E822</small>				1981 - 1998, Maryland Unintentional Firearm Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E822</small>				1981 - 1998, Maryland Unintentional Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E800-E829, E860-E869</small>			
Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate	Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate	Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate
1981	298	51,253,215	0.58	1981	0*	907,024	0.00*	1981	111	907,024	12.24
1982	279	51,330,404	0.54	1982	1*	895,982	0.11*	1982	136	895,982	15.40
1983	243	51,468,662	0.47	1983	1*	889,543	0.11*	1983	111	889,543	12.48
1984	287	51,482,956	0.56	1984	3*	890,549	0.33*	1984	104	890,549	11.68
1985	278	51,533,896	0.54	1985	0*	891,336	0.00*	1985	108	891,336	12.23
1986	234	51,535,055	0.45	1986	1*	897,228	0.11*	1986	116	897,228	12.93
1987	247	51,569,170	0.48	1987	0*	914,424	0.00*	1987	113	914,424	12.36
1988	277	52,450,896	0.53	1988	1*	944,782	0.10*	1988	98	944,782	10.37
1989	273	53,221,031	0.51	1989	0*	971,675	0.00*	1989	110	971,675	11.32
1990	236	54,112,802	0.44	1990	0*	1,003,421	0.00*	1990	82	1,003,421	8.17
1991	227	55,072,789	0.41	1991	4*	1,028,732	0.39*	1991	111	1,028,732	10.79
1992	216	55,886,506	0.39	1992	0*	1,048,714	0.00*	1992	97	1,048,714	9.27
1993	205	56,624,488	0.36	1993	0*	1,064,093	0.00*	1993	91	1,064,093	8.55
1994	180	57,168,807	0.32	1994	1*	1,072,076	0.09*	1994	118	1,072,076	11.01
1995	181	57,481,412	0.31	1995	0*	1,079,390	0.00*	1995	111	1,079,390	10.28
1996	138	57,734,790	0.24	1996	1*	1,071,848	0.09*	1996	85	1,071,848	7.94
1997	142	57,969,254	0.25	1997	1*	1,076,308	0.09*	1997	77	1,076,308	7.15
1998	121	58,169,704	0.21	1998	1*	1,083,642	0.09*	1998	78	1,083,642	7.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,067</b>	<b>976,327,497</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>15*</b>	<b>17,728,767</b>	<b>0.08*</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,859</b>	<b>17,728,767</b>	<b>10.49</b>

Drownings take more lives of Maryland children under 14 than firearms by a factor of 18 over the shown period. Even knives, scissors, ... take more children’s lives than firearms. More Maryland children suffocate (e.g., choke on solid food) by a factor of 16 than die from firearms. Data obtained was from the CDC site <http://webapp.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/morttrate9.html>

1981 - 1998, Maryland Drowning/Submersion Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E810, E812, E813, E814, E815, E816</small>				1981 - 1998, Maryland Cutlery Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E860, E861, E862, E863, E864</small>				1981 - 1998, Maryland Suffocation Deaths and Rates per 100,000 <small>All Races, Both Sexes, Ages 0 to 14 ICD-9 Codes: E811, E813, E814, E815, E816</small>			
Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate	Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate	Year	Number of Deaths	Population***	Crude Rate
1981	15*	907,024	2.09*	1981	1*	907,024	0.11*	1981	10*	907,024	1.10*
1982	22	895,982	2.46	1982	1*	895,982	0.11*	1982	14*	895,982	1.56*
1983	12*	889,543	1.34*	1983	2*	889,543	0.22*	1983	18*	889,543	2.02*
1984	17*	890,549	1.90*	1984	2*	890,549	0.22*	1984	14*	890,549	1.57*
1985	11*	891,336	1.22*	1985	1*	891,336	0.11*	1985	10*	891,336	1.12*
1986	20*	897,228	2.22*	1986	0*	897,228	0.00*	1986	16*	897,228	1.78*
1987	33*	914,424	3.58*	1987	0*	914,424	0.00*	1987	14*	914,424	1.53*
1988	15*	944,782	1.58*	1988	0*	944,782	0.00*	1988	13*	944,782	1.39*
1989	19*	971,675	1.95*	1989	7*	971,675	0.72*	1989	20*	971,675	2.05*
1990	12*	1,003,421	1.19*	1990	0*	1,003,421	0.00*	1990	8*	1,003,421	0.79*
1991	14*	1,028,732	1.36*	1991	2*	1,028,732	0.19*	1991	11*	1,028,732	1.06*
1992	18*	1,048,714	1.71*	1992	2*	1,048,714	0.19*	1992	11*	1,048,714	1.05*
1993	16*	1,064,093	1.50*	1993	0*	1,064,093	0.00*	1993	6*	1,064,093	0.56*
1994	7*	1,072,076	0.65*	1994	1*	1,072,076	0.09*	1994	18*	1,072,076	1.71*
1995	14*	1,079,390	1.29*	1995	3*	1,079,390	0.27*	1995	13*	1,079,390	1.20*
1996	15*	1,071,848	1.39*	1996	4*	1,071,848	0.37*	1996	17*	1,071,848	1.59*
1997	10*	1,076,308	0.92*	1997	4*	1,076,308	0.37*	1997	10*	1,076,308	0.92*
1998	13*	1,083,642	1.19*	1998	1*	1,083,642	0.09*	1998	12*	1,083,642	1.10*
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>17,728,767</b>	<b>1.55</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17,728,767</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>17,728,767</b>	<b>1.36</b>

**So Why Doesn't MAHA talk about the real Problem it is trying to solve?**