



Itasca County Sheriff's Office

JOE DASOVICH, SHERIFF

February 8, 2023

Honorable
Representative Matt Bliss
Representative Spencer Igo

I am sending this memo with great concern for our way of life in greater Minnesota and as American citizens. Bill HF396 regarding the storage of firearms and ammunition is a direct attack on responsible firearm owners and sportsmen alike. I find that enacting a law on how to store ammunition and firearms is a direct overstep by government.

Lawmakers hoping to enact HF396 are short-sighted and instead need to view Minnesota Statute 609.666 as a more sensible statute that is already in place. Statute 609.666 states that, "A person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor who negligently stores or leaves a loaded firearm in a location where the person knows, or reasonably should know, that a child is likely to gain access, unless reasonable action is taken to secure the firearm against access by the child." Additionally, Minnesota Statute 624.713 addresses those ineligible to possess firearms. This statute keeps firearms out of the hands of criminals. As demonstrated, we have sufficient current legislation to keep firearms safe and out of the hands of both children and criminals.

It is very unsettling to see agendas being advanced in response to a national reaction to gun violence. I recommend that those uncomfortable with firearms take a hunter's education course and learn the benefits of safe firearm use. I think a healthy knowledge of safe firearm use will do nothing but assist individuals in making more educated decisions.

As an elected official, I must represent all the citizens in my county. However, I find that HF396 presents a partisan approach to the issue of firearm storage. I implore lawmakers to instead address the mental health crisis which I believe warrants more attention and should be a bipartisan topic. Over my career in law enforcement, I went from seldomly dealing with people in mental health crisis to now dealing with multiple incidents per day. Addressing the true issue, mental health, would be a more successful method than attacking lawful firearm owners.

I would also like to note that I have a fourteen year old daughter who enjoys outdoor activities and youth sports. Along with the mainstream sports she participates in, she also participates in trap shooting. With more than 12,000 state youth participants, we are growing a generation of responsible firearm owners. Please be aware of these positive firearm stories throughout this state and the way they outnumber the negative ones.



NASHWAUK/KEEWATIN ISD 319 ALL-GIRL TRAP LINE (THE ONLY ONE IN THE STATE)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Dasovich".

Sheriff Joe Dasovich
Itasca County Sheriff
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218-326-3477