

## SAFE STORAGE

### THE PROBLEM

While federal law largely prohibits the sale of firearms to a juvenile, it does not impose further obligations on gun owners regarding the storage of privately-owned firearms.

### THE FACTS

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that more than 1,200 children died in unintentional shootings between 2004 and 2016; over half were under the age of 15.
- A study published by American Academy of Pediatrics in 2018 found that within a sample of parents who owned guns, only onethird stored all household firearms locked and unloaded.
- An estimated 4.6 million children live in homes where firearms are stored loaded and unlocked.
- A nationwide study of over 100 unintentional firearm deaths in the USA between 2012 and 2013 found that 70% of unintentional child shootings could have been avoided if the weapon used had been safeguarded – locked or without ammunition

### THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

1. **RIGHT TO STAY ALIVE:** The state has a duty to prevent abuses of the right to stay alive by taking measures to address actual or foreseeable threats to this right, including in the context of gun violence.
2. **CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD:** The U.S. signed this global convention in 1995. This means that the U.S. should recognize the particular vulnerabilities of children and provide “special safeguards and care” in order to protect them from gun violence, including strict regulation of the possession and use of firearms, and preventing access to firearms by those at risk of misusing them.

### THE POLICY

- Safe storage laws work to protect children from injuring themselves and others by requiring gun owners to keep guns locked up and unloaded, and ammunition stored in a locked location separate from the firearm.
- Child Access Prevention (CAP) laws go one step further by imposing criminal liability to ensure that owners are held accountable for the security of their weapons.

### AIUSA'S RECOMMENDATION

- The US Congress should pass legislation requiring the safe and secure storage of all guns and ammunition, and state legislatures should pass stringent and comprehensive safe storage and Child Access Prevention (“CAP”) laws that mandate all individuals to store all firearms unloaded under the protection of a gun lock or safety device;
- Health care providers must be able to discuss the presence of firearms in the home, gun safety and safe storage with the gun owner and/or others within the household.
- All states should require firearm owners to keep firearms locked and unloaded and safely stored in locked boxes or firearm safes, out of plain sight, with ammunition stored separately from the firearm, in their home or vehicle.