



NEWTOWN ACTION ALLIANCE SUPPORTS **Ethan's Law** *Safe and Secure Storage of Firearms*

SPONSORED BY:

SENATORS RICHARD BLUMENTHAL ([S.173](#))
REPRESENTATIVES ROSA DELAURO ([H.R. 660](#))

Passed in [H.R. 7910, the Protect Our Kids Act](#) on June 8, 2022

On January 31, 2018, Kristin and Mike Song's beautiful boy, Ethan, walked out of his home and towards his death in Guildford, Connecticut. He walked to his neighbor's home to visit his friend. Their neighbor's father had three unsecured guns and ammunition in a shoe box. The boys started handling the guns. The gun went off and Ethan was shot in the head. Tragically, he died on the way to the hospital.

Ethan's story is yet another reminder that the presence of unsecured firearms in the home increases the risk of unintentional and intentional shootings nationwide. **Ethan's Law** would address this deadly gap in the current law.

What will Ethan's Law do?

Safe & Secure Storage of Firearms: It would be against the law for a person to keep any firearm unsecured on their premises if they should reasonably expect that a minor or resident who cannot lawfully possess a firearm may gain access to that firearm. If a person stores their firearm using a secure safety device, within a secure location, or within readily retrievable proximity to that person, then the firearm would be considered safely and securely stored.

Fair & Firm Penalties for Violations: A person would be fined \$500 for each instance their firearm is kept unsecured on their premises. If a minor or resident who cannot lawfully possess a firearm gains access to an unsecured firearm and causes injury as a result, the owner of that firearm may be fined and imprisoned up to five years.

State Incentives to Adopt Similar Law: States and Indian Tribes may receive grants to assist law enforcement agencies and courts in implementing a state law that similarly prohibits unsecure storage of firearms.

Access to Civil Justice for Injured Persons: It is the sense of Congress that violators of this law would be held civilly liable for injuries resulting from the unsecure storage of their firearm.

Why is Ethan's Law Important?

- Firearms are now the [leading cause of death for American children and teens](#) (0-19) in the United States.
- Each day in America, [five children are killed by guns and another 17 are shot and injured](#).
- **8 children** a day are injured or killed by unsecured guns.
- According to a Harvard University analysis, over [5.4 million children](#) live in homes with unsecured guns.
- According to the U.S. Secret Service, [76% of school shooters](#) acquired their guns from the home of a parent or another close relative.
- Safe firearm storage practices are supported by [nearly three-quarters](#) of Americans.
- In 2015, **one in three** U.S. households with children had firearms with nearly 14,000 children and teens treated for nonfatal firearm injuries; and 2,800 died by gunfire. Of these deaths, 782 could be attributed to the presence of unlocked guns.
- According to a recent study published in JAMA Pediatrics, **6% to 32%** of youth firearm deaths (by suicide and unintentional firearm injury) could be prevented if all household firearms are stored locked.
- **73%** of children under the age of 10 living in homes with firearms reported knowing the location of their parents' firearms. 36 percent of those children reported handling their parents' unsecured firearms.
- The presence of unsecured firearms in the home increases the risk of unintentional and intentional shootings. Over **75%** of firearms used in youth suicide attempts and unintentional firearm injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or a friend.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that if parents decide to keep firearms in their home, all firearms should be locked, unloaded, and separate from ammunition however only **3 of 10 adults** in households with children report storing all guns unloaded and locked up.
- Safe storage practices are also important to keep firearms away from dangerous individuals. In the last decade, nearly **2,000,000** firearms have been reported stolen. Between 2010 and 2016, police recovered more than **23,000** stolen firearms that were used to commit kidnapping, armed robberies, sexual assaults, murders, and other violent crimes. Despite the reoccurrences of these horrific and preventable tragedies, current law fails to hold irresponsible gun owners accountable.

Ethan's Law in Connecticut

During the 2019 Connecticut Legislative Session, Ethan's Law passed with significant bipartisan support.

HOUSE VOTE: 127-16

SENATE VOTE: 34-2

Cosponsor Ethan's Law

Senate: Contact David Stoopler at David.Stoopler@judiciary-dem.senate.gov or (202) 224-2823 from Senator Blumenthal's office to cosponsor S. 173.

House of Representatives: Contact Harper White at harper.white@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-3661 from Representative Rosa DeLauro's office to cosponsor H.R. 660.