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Contact: Blake Dellinger

(818) 558-3043

Friedman’s Gun Safety Legislation Passes Education Committee with Unanimous Support

SACRAMENTO – On Wednesday, a gun safety bill by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) passed its first test with bipartisan support in the Assembly Education Committee. Assembly Bill 276 will curb youth access to firearms by requiring schools to send home valuable safe firearm storage information to families.

“The statistics are clear – safe gun storage saves lives,” said Assemblymember Friedman. “Ensuring that families have accurate information about the law regarding safe gun storage, the dangers of improper storage, and how best to keep firearms secured is a proven way to reduce the life-threatening risks of guns in the home.”

California has some of the most comprehensive safe firearm storage laws in the country, including requiring all firearms sold in California be accompanied by a Department of Justice-approved firearms safety device. It is also a crime for a person to negligently store or leave a firearm on premises within the person's custody or control where the person knows that a minor is present. However, even with these laws, we continue to have regular school shootings across our state. As many as 75% of school shootings are facilitated by minors having access to unsecured firearms at home.

4.6 million children in the United States live in homes with access to an unlocked or unsupervised gun, with 75% of those children knowing where the firearm is stored. 25% of California adults live in households with firearms; 40% of those households have children 12 or younger; 10% of gun owners own 10 or more guns. 695 firearms were lost or stolen in California in 2018; 389 firearms were lost or stolen in 2017. There is a direct correlation between these incidents, access to firearms, and the lack of proper information being available to gun owners.

Friedman’s measure requires the Department of Education and Department of Justice to create a notification for schools to distribute outlining the state’s safe gun storage laws and child access prevention laws. If successful, this measure will provide parents with the tools they need to navigate California’s safe storage laws, in order to keep our children safe.

The measure is sponsored by Brady California United Against Gun Violence and has quickly garnered support among other groups advocating for stronger firearm safety laws.

“As we continue to see youth suicide rates increase, unintentional shootings in the home increase and when we know that the majority of school shootings are facilitated by kids having access to unsecured guns in the home, it is clear that we need a solution to keep our kids safe,” said Amanda Wilcox, Legislation and Policy Chair for the California Chapters of Brady United Against Gun Violence. “AB 276 is another part of the solution to this pressing issue. By ensuring that schools make parents and guardians aware of safe storage and child access prevention laws, resources and regulations, this bill shines a light on an often overlooked issue by leveraging an existing partner in children’s lives. This is a vital step forward in ensuring comprehensive violence prevention.”

The measure passed the Assembly Education Committee with unanimous support. It now heads to the Assembly’s Appropriations Committee.

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Laura Friedman represents the 43rd Assembly District which encompasses the cities of Burbank, Glendale, and La Cañada Flintridge, as well as the communities of La Crescenta and Montrose, and the Los Angeles neighborhoods of Atwater Village, Beachwood Canyon, Los Feliz, East Hollywood, Franklin Hills, and Silver Lake.