

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 1387

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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Hearing Date: March 16, 2021 8:00 AM

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Harold Waters

self

Houston, TX

This bill makes it easier for foster parents to protect the children in their care. Please vote in support of this needed legislation.

Scott Brosi

GOA

DALLAS, TX

I SUPPORT THIS BILL

Russell Martz

Self

Highland Village, TX

The purpose of having a firearm in many cases is self defense. By requiring separate storage, or concurrent storage with the firearm inoperable, the ability of the firearm to be used in defense is greatly reduced or negated. There are already laws regarding safe storage. This infringes on the ability of the legal firearm owner to bear arms in an efficient manner and should not be considered.

RONALD TIMOTHY

-- please select a prefix --

Commerce, TX

Guns protect people and must be available to do so. Regulations that take guns out of use in homes and schools have made it possible for the criminal element to become emboldened and has cost lives.

Richard Hanson

Self

El Paso, TX

Support this bill.

Tim Kane

seld, retired

Tyler, TX

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If a family is responsible enough to be designated a "foster family" they are responsible enough to ensure their firearms are safely stored. We must not lose sight of the hard reality that to provide protection to a family, the firearm must be loaded and readily available so as to ensure the safety of the family members until law enforcement arrive.

Danny Mitchell

Self, Retired

Leonard, TX

I support HB1387. Self defense is our Second Amendment right and I will remember my legislators actions on this legislation when I cast my vote.

Zakare Waddell

Self, Production Manager

Bonham, TX

I support this action, as it would allow foster parents the ability to defend themselves and their foster children's lives in a timely manner, by removing an infringement on their inherit rights.

maxwell cook

Self , Software Engineer

San Antonio, TX

Please support this bill. Foster parents, like any Texan, need to have reasonable and timely access to their firearms to protect themselves and their family. There are many children who depend on foster parents and any limit in their rights may impede some folks from Becoming foster parents.

Joe Chambers, Mr.

N/A

Channing, TX

SUPPORT HB 1387

Vin Chang

Self- Engineer

Farmers Branch, TX

I support the repeal of this awful ban. In dire situations, parents must be able to quickly round up their children and be able to use any means necessary to defend and protect their loved ones.

Woodrow Carter, HB 1387

Self / Retired

LIVINGSTON, TX

Please vote yes.

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Larry Vaughan, Captain

Self/Pilot

Amarillo, TX

Please support this bill which would remove unnecessary storage restrictions on firearms in certain foster homes.

Kenneth Cunningham

self

PORTER, TX

I oppose, rendering a firearm inert in this way only hinders foster parents from protecting the family and will result in the death of someone innocent.

Ted Moore

Self

north richland hills, TX

I encourage Texas Lawmakers to support the pro gun bill HB 1387. Its time to roll back the draconian unconstitutional gun laws that have been forced down Texans and Americans throats and let the anti gunners know that their attempts to trample our rights will no longer be allowed.

Candido Bernabe II, Mr.

Self

Cedar Park, TX

This will only increase the safety of any and all citizens.

If defensive gun use is common then many criminals should certainly have encountered armed resistance. Professors James D. Wright and Peter Rossi surveyed 2,000 felons incarcerated in state prisons across the United States. Wright and Rossi reported that 34% of the felons said they personally had been "scared off, shot at, wounded, or captured by an armed victim"; 69% said that they knew at least one other criminal who had also; 34% said that when thinking about committing a crime they either "often" or "regularly" worried that they "[m]ight get shot at by the victim"; and 57% agreed with the statement, "Most criminals are more worried about meeting an armed victim than they are about running into the police." (James D. Wright & Peter H. Rossi, *Armed and Considered Dangerous: A Survey of Felons and Their Firearms* [1986].

Where is HB 553 ("Second Amendment Preservation Act") ?

Christopher Pyle

'self' Geologist

Kemah, TX

Support

This is common sense...

Barbara Brashear

Hood County Republican Chair Precinct12

Granbury, TX

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I support this ban.

Charles Freeman

self, retired

Overton, TX

I support this bill.

Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.

Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility, will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms

Bryan Graham

Self

Little Elm, TX

I believe that if we are willing to trust parents to care for foster children, then we assume they are competent enough to properly store firearms safely to prevent them from being used in an inappropriate manner. Storing them in separate locations from their ammo means they are not ready for self-protection when needed and wouldn't be readily accessible if needed. If we trust them, then trust them completely and please vote Yes to this bill! Thank you!

Samuel Alvarado

Self.

Venus, TX

The people of texas are in favor of this bill

Von Long

self

Katy, TX

I am writing in support of H.B. 1387. This bill would allow foster parents and other legal gun owners in a foster home who have an LTC to store firearms and ammunition together in the same locked container, without having to disable the firearm.

Current law states that LTC holders may possess firearms and ammunition in a foster home, and directs the Department of Family and Protective Services / CPS to create minimum storage standards that require firearms and ammunition to be stored in separate locked containers – or in the same locked container, if the firearm was disabled through a trigger lock or other mechanism.

Foster parents have primary responsibility for protection of their families. Like all Texans, they need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency.

Safe storage is important. However, there is no legislative solution capable of addressing all situations. Safe storage is the responsibility of the individual gun owner, who will evaluate the circumstances unique to their situation.

Texas should not raise unnecessary difficulties to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

Mary Mims

Self

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Pflugerville, TX

SUPPORT

Cynthia Mims

Self

Pflugerville, TX

Support

Cindy Vogel

Self / IT

Plano, TX

Support.

Cal Dean

Self/business owner

Richmond, TX

I strongly support this bill. I agree it is important for all parents to safeguard children in their care. This includes proper care and storage of firearms. It is however the right & responsibility of each individual parent to decide what is correct for their situation. A firearm that is unloaded, disabled & stored in a separate locked container from ammunition in a locked container is of little use in an emergency situation.

Wayne Wilks

self, UnionWireman

Fort Worth, TX

I Support HB 1387,

Makes sense to have ammo and firearm in the same lock box.

Mike Clancy

self

FRISCO, TX

Please SUPPPORT: HB 1387 by Rep. Patterson – repeals the ban that currently requires foster parents to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers (or together, but with the firearm disabled).

Donald Still, Retired. USN

Self, Retired Navy

Longview, TX

Strongly support! A disabled firearm is a useless firearm. In a time of defensive need disabled fire arms would only be useful as clubs, not their intended equalizing function. Defensive firearm use saves lives as stated by the USCDC.

Jane Huber

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self

Bulverde, TX

I support this bill Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.

- Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility, will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms. There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary bars to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

David Allen, Lt. Col.

self

Ovilla, TX

I can understand the need to insure that the children in foster care reside in a safe environment. Restricting the access to self protection firearms does not insure a safe environment. If a Texan has a LTC he/she knows the responsibilities that accompany such trust. He/she also knows what is required to defend oneself, loved ones, and/or property. A firearm that is stored in a manner that prevents it's immediate use for self defense is of no value at all. Foster parents are well aware of the trust the State of Texas has in their ability to provide proper and appropriate care for children in their charge. Why would the State of Texas have a law to hamper these selfless servants of the state in providing the safest environment for their charges? HB 1387 corrects previously passed legislation that placed children in foster homes at unnecessary risk.

Christopher Melas

self

Austin, TX

I support this bill fully. All Texans, including foster parents, need to have ready access to their firearms in order to defend themselves and their families in case of emergency. On a daily basis 600-8,000 Americans use their firearms to defend themselves. Foster parents take on tremendous responsibility for no reason other than to serve their foster children and there is no reason to punish them by restricting their ability to defend themselves AND their foster children. Safe firearm storage is tremendously important but there is no one-size-fit-all legislative solution. Citizens should be treated like responsible adults who will find the best storage solutions for their specific situation.

Raymond Brintle

Self

Crowley, TX

I support HB 1387. Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.

Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility and will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms.

There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary bars to becoming foster parents, such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

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Kate Murphy, Senior Child Welfare Policy Associate

Texans Care for Children

Austin, TX

All children in foster care have experienced trauma, which increases the risks of suicide and other tragic consequences correlated with gun access. According to the Child Welfare League of America, unintentional injury is the leading cause of death for children and young adults. Firearms are the eighth leading cause of accidental death for children ages 5-9 and the tenth leading cause for ages 10-14. A 2006 study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that youth in foster care were three times more likely to consider suicide and four times more likely to attempt suicide than youth who have never been in foster care. In 2020, 33 children and youth known by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services died due to abuse or neglect: four died because of a gunshot wound, two were self-inflicted, and one followed previous suicide attempts. Because of these risks, National Model Licensing Standards for foster homes (available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/im1901.pdf>) require weapons and ammunition to be stored separately, locked, unloaded, and inaccessible to children. Federal law requires states to comply with the model standards or justify any deviation. Texas is already not in compliance with this requirement because of a similar law that passed during the 86th legislative session. This bill would cause Texas to be even further from compliance and make guns more accessible to children in foster care who are at a high risk of suicide or accidental gun injury.

Chris Edmiston

Self

Austin, TX

I support this bill.

Seconds. That's what it takes to save or lose a life. When a tragedy occurs and the LTC possessing foster parent needs to save the children under their care, every single second counts. It's irresponsible to risk children's lives by adding unnecessary seconds to a response time. It can be incredibly hard to open a lock quickly and under pressure, even if you've done it a hundred times before. This problem is exacerbated by multiple locks where the probability of getting it right twice in a row goes down, resulting in increased delays. This bill aims to fix the obvious problems with the existing law that unnecessarily puts the lives of children in danger.

It would be sad to lose a life because it takes too long to get through multiple locks.

William Petrosky, Mr.

Petrosky\*

New Braunfels, TX

Hello:

I am writing to ask that this legislation be supported. Law-abiding gun owners who happen to be foster parents (or children of their own) need the ability to respond quickly to home invaders, burglars and anyone threatening life and limb. A firearm for home defense is of no use if it is disabled, or unloaded with ammunition kept in a separate locked location when seconds count. The lawful gun owner should have the discretion to store his or her firearm in a manner that achieves the proper level of safety without a one-size-fits-all imposition. I ask that HR1387 be approved.

Thank you.

Jeffrey Reins

Self

Canton, TX

I support this bill. It is not the government's business what a person does inside his home pertaining to firearms and their care.

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Chris Wills  
Self  
Fort Worth, TX

I am asking that you vote FOR this repeal of a previous infringement of our God given right.

Lillian Neal  
Self  
Sweetwater, TX

I support this bill and ask you to vote YES. Foster parents just like any other parent needs to have quick and safe access to their firearm in case of an emergency. Thank you for voting YES on this bill.

Melisha Corbitt  
Self  
Austin, TX

I support HB 1387. Foster parents who are LTC holders need to have ready access to their firearms in case of an emergency. It's all about response time. Every second a foster parent is spending on trying to open several locked storage containers to access their weapons and ammunition, is a second the criminal has to inflict harm or cause death. It's difficult to open a locked storage container under stress and even more difficult to do so multiple times to access weapons and ammunition that are stored separately. We shouldn't make it harder for foster parents to defend and protect their families and children in their care.

David Renner  
Self  
Waxahachie, TX

The whole and entire purpose of the 2nd amendment is meant for the protection of hearth and home. This is meant to make sure you are able to care for and protect all of those you love, protect, and are responsible for. This is insane that you cannot have ready access to the protection they need to keep their family and all they care for safe. Foster kids are just as important and biological kids. Whoever defined foster kids as less human and less worthy of protection is a disgusting human being. I fully support the ability of foster parents to have the same rights as biological parents to protect those that they love and protect.

Jon Franklin  
self, software engineer  
Pflugerville, TX

Please support this bill. The government should not be in the business of telling foster parents how to defend themselves and their loved ones. The current law unjustly restricts how those parents can do that, by effectively requiring them to disarm themselves. There are plenty of ways to safely store a firearm in a home away from children while at the same time giving quick access in an emergency for defense of family. This bill will give the good foster parents of our state that ability. Accidental deaths from firearms, while terribly tragic, are fortunately extremely low. This bill is the right thing to do, and will make Texas foster homes safer from violence.

Jeff chan  
Self  
MCKINNEY, TX

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Please support HB 1387. The bill allows foster parents (and other legal gun owners in a foster home) who have an LTC to store firearms and ammunition together in the same locked container, without having to disable the firearm.

Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.

Dennis Prather

Self

Midlothian, TX

I support this Bill because Foster Parents should be able to quickly defend themselves as well as the children they are raising. They chose to take in these children to love and cherish, as well as to keep them safe and defend them.

Regards, Dennis Prather

tyree white

self

temple, TX

Dear Texas Legislature,

Please support foster parents having very fast access to a firearm for self defense. It is a Right for all people even a foster parent.

Thank.

Hilliard Brittain

Self

GARLAND, TX 75044, TX

HB 1387 strikes language in Section 42.042(e-1) of the Human Resources Code that currently requires foster parents to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers (or together, but with the firearm disabled). I urge you to support this bill for the following reasons:

- Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.
- Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility. It may have a somewhat different look in each circumstance but still ensure that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not.
- There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary barriers to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

Vincent and Aida Scalerio

Self - Insurance Adjuster and Business woman

San Antonio, TX

Please support HB 1387 by Rep. Patterson. Thank you.

Jo Foley

self N/A

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Henderson, TX

I support HB 1387 which changes the cumbersome and unrealistic regulations for gun storage by foster parents. Firearms are not needed at set times, they must be easy and quick to get to on a second's notice. Different people will have different ways to handle that situation. Foster parents are needed to help and care for children and they should not be burdened with unrealistic rules.

Oscar Bradley Martinez

Self

San Antonio, TX

Committee members, it is a grave concern to many Americans, especially Texans, considering the social dynamic, the narrative and the circumstances that surround us, that lawmakers and governments are making radical redefinements to the laws that dictate our lives.

As a citizen who strongly believes in the ideals upon which Our Union was founded and unto which the Republic of Texas sought statehood therein, I strongly support the proposal to repeal the law that mandates Foster parents to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers, or with firearm disabled if together with ammunition in the same container.

Foster or biological, it is the parents duty to teach the children about firearm safety and that guns are not toys. It is not up to any governing body to dictate the lives of it's citizens and create pointless cumbersome laws. Those laws only hinder the responsible law abiding citizen from effectively and efficiently upholding their rights to self preservation. The notion that such ridiculous laws are created to better preserve life is demonstrable as it only endangers the life of the innocent and empowers the evil which cares not for such laws.

Any lawmaker who espouses the idea that "common sense gun control" is for the benefit of the public good needs to be ashamed. For such an idea only punishes and holds a majority of innocent citizens accountable to the heinous acts of a minority of criminals. So too will it take away and limit the right of such law abiding citizens, make them more vulnerable to a rising number of increasingly violent offenders who will take advantage, all the while, corrupt government officials more easily consolidating more power for themselves.

Therefore, Oscar Bradley Martinez fully supports this proposal and urges the other committee members to give their full support as well.

Louis Wichers

Texas Gun Sense

Austin, TX

Statement by Louis Wichers, Vice President, Texas Gun Sense Board

Texas Gun Sense is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for common sense, evidence-based policies that reduce gun injuries and deaths. We respectfully oppose HB 1387 because it is not safe for foster children and other people living in the foster home.

I was a school teacher for 8 years, a full time police officer for 15+ years, and a law enforcement analyst for 10 years. I am a recreational shooter. I represent Texas Gun Sense and we oppose HB 1387.

HB 1387 deals with one of the National Rifle Association's (NRA) safety rules in a situation where children are present. The NRA rule states: "Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons." To understand this rule when children are present, we can turn to gun manufacturers such as Beretta, Glock, Kimber, Ruger, Smith & Wesson, and Springfield Armory. The online owner's manuals of these gun manufacturers say something similar to: Keep out of reach of children. For increased safety, firearms should be stored unloaded in a location that is secure and inaccessible to children and any other unauthorized person and with ammunition locked securely in a different location ([https://www.kimberamerica.com/media/wysiwyg/manual-download/1911-Full-Size-Manual\\_11-2015.pdf](https://www.kimberamerica.com/media/wysiwyg/manual-download/1911-Full-Size-Manual_11-2015.pdf)). The aforementioned gun manufacturers represent hundreds of years of gun

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experience and donate hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars to the NRA. One wonders why any group, person or governmental entity would propose contradicting their guidelines when it comes to safe firearm storage around children including foster children. Unauthorized access to improperly stored firearms involving children, manifests itself in several ways. Most of us can recall news stories of a child finding an improperly stored firearm and unintentionally shooting a sibling, relative or friend. Some of us may know of parents who have lost a child to suicide with a family firearm.

I lived in the Chicago area for 5 years and the Memphis area for 7 years without a gun. I lived without a gun in a country for 2 years that had several civil wars and 2 invasions in the 20 years prior to my arrival. I know families that lived for many years in this country without a firearm. No situation I encountered in these places would have been improved by the presence of a firearm.

I am sure the state of Texas screens potential foster families for such things as substance abuse issues, the sale or possession of illegal drugs, volatile social or romantic relationships, owing persons other than financial institutions large sums of money, gambling issues, and anger management issues. These screenings mitigate sources of violent incidents such as home invasions. Research shows that using to defensive gun use is very rare & a firearm in the home puts you at 2x the risk of homicide and 3 X the risk of homicide. (GVPedia)

Josh Lloyd

Self

Elgin, TX

Why should foster parents be treated differently than anyone else? TX penal code section 46.13 already covers the mishandling of firearms around children, foster parents should not lose their right for self protection and the right to protect their family during a home invasion.

Clayton Travis

Texas Pediatric Society

Austin, TX

Chair Frank, Vice-Chair Hinojosa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of the 4,500 members of the Texas Pediatric Society (TPS), the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 1387.

While we appreciate Representative Harris' intent to ensure foster care parents have ease of access to their firearms to protect children in the rare circumstances of home invasion, we are extremely concerned about moving away from best practice firearm safe storage guidelines. Firearm related injuries are the second leading cause of death among children and adolescents in the United States, accounting for nearly 3000 child deaths annually. Each year, an additional 5700 children require medical treatment for a firearm-related injury. Approximately 19 children are either treated in an emergency room for a gunshot wound or are killed with a firearm each day. Boys, older children, and minorities are particularly likely to be impacted. At least 35 percent of child firearms deaths are suicides and over four percent are due to accidental shootings. In recent years, the number of firearm related suicides by children have been increasing. Notably, over 71 percent of firearm related suicides of children are precipitated by relationship issues with family, friends, or romantic partners, and 42 percent by a recent or impending crisis. Both triggers are occurrences frequently faced by children in the foster system. Firearm related death and injury contribute significantly to the premature death of children and constitute a significant public health problem.

The American Academy of Pediatrics affirms that separate storage of firearms and ammunition is the best practice for firearm safety. Easy access to firearms and ammunition increase the risk for both accidental shootings and, importantly, the likelihood of suicide attempts and suicide completion. For foster homes, separate and safe storage of firearms and ammunition is vitally important because of the heightened rates of trauma, suicide, and self-harm among youth in the foster system. Nearly a quarter of children in foster care will have thoughts related to death or self-harm, significantly higher than rates for the general population. Access to guns increases the risk that individuals will act on these ideations. In 2020, six youth who were involved with DFPS in the two preceding years died by suicide, compared to the one or two fatalities seen in previous years. DFPS's policies requiring safe storage of firearms, including ensuring guns are locked, unloaded, and from ammunition, are imperative to ensuring the health and safety of youth in foster care who are at heightened risk for suicidal ideation and self-harm.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 1387.

Brian Morales

Texans

Bellaire, TX

I SUPPORT: HB 1387 by Rep. Patterson.

Mitchell Haynie

Self Retired Veteran

Hamlin, TX

I support the repeal of this ban. The message it sends is that a foster home is inherently more dangerous if a firearm is present, and places foster parents in a position of default as untrustworthy with the safe storage and use of a firearm. If the foster system has concerns over the safety of a household or foster parent then the logical solution is to not place the child in that home, not subject the the home and parent to clear infringements of their 2nd Amendment rights as a condition of doing a job very few want, and some in the system prove to be dangerous to the child, even without a gun in the home. I respectfully ask that this committee oppose and vote NO on this bill.

Aimee Turney

League of Women Voters of Texas

Houston, TX

The League of Women Voters of Texas OPPOSES HB 1387.

Arthur Simon

self, artist

Austin, TX

I oppose this bill because foster families must be encouraged to safely store firearms with trigger locks

Jeff Huntley

Self - Chief Training Officer at local Fire Department

North Richland Hills, TX

I fully support HB 1387 for the following reasons:

- Current law states that LTC holders may possess firearms and ammunition in a foster home, and directs the Department of Family and Protective Services / CPS to create minimum storage standards that require firearms and ammunition to be stored in separate locked containers – or in the same locked container, if the firearm was disabled through a trigger lock or other mechanism.
- Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.
- Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility, will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of

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ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms.

- There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary bars to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage

Donald Dahl

SELF, FIREARMS RIGHTS ACTIVIST

ROUND ROCK, TX

This bill does an excellent job of blending firearms safety and the needs of foster parents. With the advent of so many vastly superior firearms security devices, the need to keep ammunition separate from your firearm, or disabling your firearms are very antiquated requirements.

Remember when you need to protect yourself or your family seconds do count, having to get your firearm and ammunition from two different places, or removing an extra trigger lock can mean the difference between life and death.

Matthew Pappas

Self/GOA

Lewisville, TX

The last thing we need in Texas are California and New York style firearms laws. Requiring separate storage of firearm and ammunition is just that kind of uninformed and unnecessary regulation. It is paramount the state maintains the safety of children in foster care and it is reasonable to have regulations on safe firearm storage in those situations. However, having a disabled firearm stored in a separate locked container from its ammunition is completely unnecessary and the type of solution an uneducated, anti-gun bureaucrat would come up with. Being able to store both firearm and ammunition together in the same locked container is sufficiently safe. It also allows the homeowner to more quickly access the firearm in the event they need to defend their home and the children in their care. With defensive use of firearms being quite high based on FBI and CDC statistics, it should be expected that any lawmaker consider access to the firearm on equal footing to its safe storage in the home. I will, therefore, encourage you to consider passage of HB 1387 to allow the reasonable protection of foster parent's homes as well as those under their care.

Alison Mohr Boleware, Government Relations Director

National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter

Austin, TX

The National Association of Social Workers – Texas Chapter (NASW/TX) stands with other child welfare and gun safety advocates to voice serious concerns with HB 1387 (Harris) as is currently written. If passed HB 1387 will take Texas law farther from the national standard for foster home safety. Children in foster care have experienced trauma and need to be cared for from a lens of awareness for that trauma and what it may mean for their daily safety. One important safety risk for foster homes to keep in mind is access to weapons and proper storage of guns and ammunition. NASW/TX believes that HB 1387 as currently written is not a proper safety measure for children in the state's foster care system and creates an unnecessary safety risk.

NASW/TX spoke with Rep. Harris's office about these concerns and appreciates the opportunity to provide this feedback.

Jim Newman

self

Grapevine, TX

I support this bill, for one main reason, just because you are a foster parent it should not change how you store and keep firearms. The fact of the matter is a parent is a parent and the same rights should be the same if you are a natural or a foster parent. Safe storage of firearms and ammo apply to all it is the individual's responsibility to make sure this is done in a safe matter. Everyone one should have the right to have access to their firearms should they need it to protect one's home be it a foster parent or a birth parent.

Kevin Pierce

Self

Allen, TX

I Support for the following reasons

Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.

- Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual's responsibility, will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms.
- There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary bars to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

Chris Freeman

Self

Jefferson, TX

Please support HB 1387.

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Rhonda Freeman

Self

Jefferson, TX

Please support HB 1387.

- Current law states that LTC holders may possess firearms and ammunition in a foster home, and directs the Department of Family and Protective Services / CPS to create minimum storage standards that require firearms and ammunition to be stored in separate locked containers – or in the same locked container, if the firearm was disabled through a trigger lock or other mechanism.

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- Foster parents, like all Texans, need to have ready access to their firearms and to be able to use them in case of an emergency – including to protect the children in their care – just like the 600-8,000 Americans every day who use firearms to defend themselves.
- Safe storage is important, but there is no one-size-fits-all legislative solution. Safe storage is an individual’s responsibility, will look like something different in each circumstance, and consists of ensuring that authorized people have access to the firearms and unauthorized people do not have access to firearms.
- There are many children in the foster care system who need the love and care of a foster family. Texas should not raise unnecessary bars to becoming foster parents – such as the current senseless restriction on firearm storage.

Carol Doucet

Self - Retired

Frost, TX

LTC holders, according to our state law permits foster parents to manage the safekeeping of their firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers or together with a locking device on the trigger.

In an emergency situation, being that the life/lives depend on swift action on the part of the LTC holder, how long would it take to get to the locked container, unlock each container and retrieve the firearm and ammunition or the one container with the trigger lock requiring the action of unlocking that device before actually taking care of the situation? If foster parents have been allowed the opportunity by the Department of Family and Protective Services/CPS, and have the required permit to have the firearm/firearms, then wouldn't it be advisable for them to determine for themselves what safe storage solution is right for them? I just see it as trusting these foster parents with not only the loving welfare of the children in their care, but the defense it sometimes takes to protect them in a quick and decisive manner. Please think about not putting an unnecessary burden on foster parents and entrusting them of the responsibility in managing the safe storage when they have authorization to have access to firearms. As an individual who believes that we have the right to protect ourselves and our loved ones in circumstances that are sometimes beyond our control, we should/need to be at the ready and not have to scramble to get to that locked container and go through all the steps to be that protector. Shouldn't the common practice of individual responsibility be the order of the day since there are no one-size-fits-all legislative solutions? Foster parents are just as any other parent when it comes to taking care of our children. They should have the same rights as all other parents and should not be held back by the current unnecessary restriction on firearm storage.

Ian Kress

Myself. Engineer.

Nassau Bay, TX

I would like to ask the Committee’s support of HB 1387. There are several problems with the current law with regards to firearms ownership, and being a foster parent.

The current requirement that firearms and ammunition be stored in separate locked containers, or the firearm disabled, was very similar to the requirement that the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional in the Heller decision. Foster parents should not be required to surrender their Constitutional rights.

The requirement reduces the ability of the foster parents to defend themselves and their family against those who wish to do them harm.

Finally, such restrictive requirements reduces the number of people willing to become foster parents. The State should be encouraging people to open their homes and hearts to children in need, not placing additional burdens and restrictions upon them.

For these reasons, please support HB 1387.

Thank you,  
Ian Kress

Bryce Willmann

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Myself

San Antonio, TX

I support this bill because it repeals the ban that currently requires foster parents to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers (or together, but with the firearm disabled)

Valerie Adame

Self Sole Proprietor Photographer

Liberty, TX

Good Morning, 55 year (life long) Texas resident, and an experienced gun owner. I support HB 1387 repealing the ban that currently requires foster parents to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers. There is a very stringent process of vetting foster guardians before they are given the responsibility of being a foster guardian. During this vetting, I believe that it is determined that these guardians have the ability to competently ensure ALL aspects of the children's lives are safe and nurturing. It takes something special to accept the responsibility of a child or adult needing supervision, who is not your own. If we as a state are able to deem those foster parents or guardians capable of protecting the child while riding a bike down the sidewalk, making sure they receive medical care when needed, are fed properly, are educated, etc, than I feel confident that this same foster or guardian is just as capable of making their own decisions about safely storing a weapon that is in the home, regardless if it is used for recreational hunting or for home protection. I also can't imagine preventing only foster parents from having an equal opportunity to protect the children in their home, by having quick access to a weapon that would be used to protect the family from an intruder. We do not limit other families from that quick access. Why would we discriminate against a foster parent. Thank you for considering my voice on this matter. Sincerely, Valerie Adame, Liberty, Texas.