

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Community Safety, Select
For HB 1229

Compiled on: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 8:17 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: March 21, 2023 2:00 PM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Shelli Robinson

Self; program manager
Austin, TX

I am against this bill. It puts the children of Texas at risk. Firearms are the leading cause of death for children. And access to firearms in the home increases the risk of both accidental and intentional firearm injury. Taking away an agency's ability to ask about firearms and therefore provide appropriate firearm safety guidance to these homes, puts our already vulnerable youth in higher-risk, and potentially avoidable, situations.

Kristy Sambor

Self
Austin, TX

Outrageous. This bill is dangerous to foster kids - who have mental hardship to begin with, and no experience with guns. They are in danger as are potentially those they encounter - like YOUR kids. No on HB 1229!!

Elizabeth Chennell

Self
Austin, TX

The leading cause of death in US children is via firearms. Child placement agencies are charged with the safety of the kids in their care. It follows that it is reasonable and pure common sense to enable child placement agencies to gain awareness of the presence of these weapons in the homes that they are placing children in. Please put the welfare of our children, especially those most vulnerable, ahead of the desire to keep firearm ownership confidential.

Laura Lee Daigle

Self
Austin, TX

Regarding of your opinions on gun ownership, foster care facilities should have as much information as possible when determining appropriate placements for children. Licensed, legal gun owners should have nothing to hide and no reason not to disclose weapons in the foster care process.

Jamie McCormick

Texas Alliance of Child & Family Services

Austin, TX

The Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services, we represent child welfare providers in Texas, including child placing agencies. We are providing comment on HB 1229, by Representative Harris. We understand the intent of the author is to ensure privacy and prohibit disclosure of specific types of weapons a foster family may own. We appreciate the intent of the bill, and believe many foster families would support this intent. While we do not believe it is intended to eliminate or interfere with existing law, we would like to recommend clarifying language to make it expressly allowed that HHSC, DFPS, and child placing agencies are still responsible for determining the presence of firearms or weapons and inspect those firearms to ensure proper storage for the purposes of licensing or inspecting foster families.

Ian Kress

Myself / Engineer

Nassau Bay, TX

I am for this bill. Foster home providers should have their privacy, and right of self-defense, respected, and in no way reduced, merely for being so kind as to offer their home for children in need.

Kathryn Williams

self

Ausatin, TX

This is a travesty. Any and all information of guns owned by foster parents should be reported to the state, as detailed as possible and as completely as possible, including the duty to report new guns purchases. I see no problem and the author introduced no harm produced by such information being reported except that some parents might have been chilled to go through the process. They presented no information or studies that show such information does not protect children. That should be the most important consideration does it pose risk to children in foster care. Please vote against it.

Sarah Berel-Harrop

Self / Seminarian, Intern Minister & Director of Religious Education

Farmers Branch, TX

I oppose this bill. We should not be making laws based on a couple people's experiences.

Foster placement agencies should be able to fully assess potential placements, putting the safety of the children first. As Rep. Jarvis Johnson's questions reveal, the guns that a family owns is not a disqualification for the potential foster families. So they have nothing to lose by disclosing. They should be willing to have a conversation about their guns and the way that the guns are stored.