

Opponent Testimony
House Federal and State Affairs Committee
HB 2304

An Act concerning education; relating to firearms; standardized firearm safety education training programs in school districts.

February 21, 2023

Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shannon Little. I'm the parent of a ten-year-old boy and I live in Topeka, Kansas. I oppose HB 2304 as the only tool to keep kids in Kansas safe from unintentional shootings and death by gun suicide. I oppose the bill because it puts the responsibility on children to prevent gun violence. Adults should be responsible for securely storing firearms.

As a concerned parent that wants to keep my child and other children in Kansas safe from gun violence, I've explored the Eddie Eagle website and the information it provides. I've watched the short videos designed to teach kids what to do if they find a gun in different situations. One common thread running through every video is that an adult leaves a firearm unsecured and accessible to children. If we also required adults to securely store firearms in Kansas we wouldn't be putting our children in the position of being the only line of defense against unintentional shootings and gun suicide.

Kansans have an ethos of personal responsibility and accountability. Training our children on what to do if they find an unsecured firearm is a step we can take to keep kids safe from gun violence, but a more responsible step we should take is to pass a secure storage law that holds adults accountable for the safety of children.

I oppose HB 2304 as the only tool to keep kids safe from gun violence because I continue to think of missing pieces in Eddie Eagle training:

- What happens if a child misses the day or days in school that Eddie Eagle takes place?
- What if a child's school district decides not to implement Eddie Eagle training?
- What if a child finds an unsecure firearm in a situation that isn't similar to Eddie Eagle trainings?
- Will children be able to remember and apply Eddie Eagle training?

Each of these gaps in Eddie Eagle training could be addressed by a secure storage law. Eddie Eagle training should be used as a last defense against unintentional shootings and gun suicide, not an only defense. I would ask that if you pass this bill that you also pass a secure storage bill. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon Little