

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2024-B004  
**Title:** Commending Safe Gun Storage  
**Proposer:** Douglas, The Rt. Rev. Ian  
**Topic:** Gun Control, Weapons

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

None

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2000-D004 Express Concern About Availability of Handguns and Assault Weapons

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).*

# B004 - Commending Safe Gun Storage

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Douglas, The Rt. Rev. Ian

**Endorsed by:** Gutiérrez, The Rt. Rev. Daniel, Perry, The Rt. Rev. Bonnie, Beckwith, The Rt. Rev. Mark

**Has Budget Implications:** No

**Cost:**

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib:** No

**Directs Dfms Staff:** Yes

**Directs Dioceses:** Yes

**Directs Executive Council:** No

**HiA:** HD

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 07 - Social Justice & United States Policy

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention commend safe gun storage practices and support lethal means safety counseling that can prevent suicides, homicides, and unintentional gun deaths and firearm injuries; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the 81st General Convention urge dioceses and congregations to distribute to members of their congregations and communities information and materials that promote the safe storage of all firearms; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the 81st General Convention urge federal, state, and local officials to support Ethan's Law and other legislation and policies that would create federal, state, and local incentives and requirements for safe gun storage; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the 81st General Convention urge federal, state, and local officials to support legislation and policies that prevent children's access to guns and impose penalties on adults who allow unsecured guns to be accessed by children; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the 81st General Convention commend legislation and policies that offer gun owners a secure place to store firearms in times of crisis; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Office of Government Relations, Episcopal Public Policy Network, dioceses, congregations, and individual Episcopalians be encouraged to advocate for increased education and funding for safe storage practices, legislation, and policies.

## **Explanation**

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Gun Violence Solutions [reports that more than half of all U.S. gun owners store firearms unlocked](#). Safely storing firearms can reduce gun injuries and deaths, especially suicides, deaths of children and youth, and unintentional shootings. Churches can play a key role in helping gun owners to secure their firearms in a safe manner. This resolution is supported by Bishops United Against Gun Violence.

Safe storage is affordable and effective. Everytown For Gun Safety cites [two studies](#): One study found that households that lock firearms and ammunition were associated with a 78% lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and an 85% percent lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens. The second study estimated that if households with guns switched to locking all of their guns, one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented.

Preventing suicides through safe storage is essential to reducing gun violence. Suicides account for the majority of gun deaths in the United States, and in 2022, [26,993 people died by gun suicide](#) - an all-time high since the Centers for Disease Control began recording data in 1968.

Safe storage is also essential to curb the rising tide of gun deaths among children and youth. The Center for Gun Violence solutions [reports that guns remained the leading cause of death for children and teens](#) in 2022, the last year for which comprehensive data is available. KFF, a leading health policy research organization, reports that of the 2,543 [child and adolescent firearm deaths](#) in 2022, 27% were due to suicides and 5% were accidental.

Safe storage can also help curb gun violence that [impacts children and teens of color disproportionately](#). KFF reports that in 2022, the rate of firearm deaths among Black youth was substantially higher than any other racial and ethnic group and six times higher than white youth. From 2018 to 2022, firearm death rates of Black youth doubled and rates among American Indian and Alaska Native youth were also higher than the rates of white, Asian and Hispanic youth although, during this period, firearm death rates among Hispanic youth increased by 73%.

Unsecured guns are also at risk of theft; Everytown for Gun Safety reports that each year, an estimated 200,000 to 500,000 [guns are stolen](#). Many are funneled into the underground market, which disproportionately fuels gun violence that affects communities of color.

Safely storing firearms makes sense and is an easy and proven way to reduce gun deaths.

Resources:

University of Michigan National Center for School Safety:

[https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/safe\\_storage\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/safe_storage_fact_sheet.pdf)

Guide to Secure Gun Storage Devices:

<https://everytownsupportfund.org/guide-to-secure-gun-storage-devices/>

Be SMART: <https://besmartforkids.org/>

Ethan's Law:

[https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/01312023ethans\\_lawonepager.pdf](https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/01312023ethans_lawonepager.pdf)

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/748/all-actions>

Note: this resolution and/or its explanation contains external references, such as URLs of websites, that may not be in the required languages of General Convention. Because of copyright restrictions, the General Convention cannot provide translations. However, your web browser may be able to provide a machine translation into another language. If you need assistance with this, please contact [gc.support@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gc.support@episcopalchurch.org).