

1/5/26

To Kansas Legislators:

On behalf of the Kansas Law Enforcement Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Council, we are writing to express our strong support for expanding The Armory Project (TAP) voluntary firearm storage program and for establishing the statutory civil liability protections necessary to make this initiative fully viable across Kansas.

One of the core missions of CIT is to strengthen and expand the resources available within our crisis response system. CIT programs statewide work to ensure that individuals experiencing behavioral health crises have access to timely, least-restrictive, and effective options for safety and stabilization. The expansion of TAP directly advances this mission. TAP creates a voluntary, community-based pathway for temporary, out-of-home storage of firearms during periods of elevated suicide risk—an option that is currently limited in Kansas due to liability concerns among Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs).

TAP aligns with a substantial and well-established body of research on suicide prevention. Increasing time and distance between an individual in crisis and a firearm is one of the most effective means-restriction strategies available to prevent suicide deaths by firearm. Crises involving suicidal intent are often brief and impulsive. When even short delays are introduced—such as through voluntary off-site firearm storage—risk of death decreases significantly. National strategies adopted by the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the VA National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, consistently identify voluntary, out-of-home firearm storage as a key intervention.

This need to expand TAP throughout the state is especially urgent for Kansas. Firearms account for 59 percent of all suicide deaths statewide and 50 percent of suicide deaths in Johnson County, with even higher rates among Kansas veterans. These numbers underscore the importance of giving families, gun owners, and law enforcement more tools to intervene before a tragedy occurs. TAP offers a voluntary, stigma-free option for individuals who may hesitate to seek help because of fear that their firearm rights will be permanently restricted.

The primary barrier to expanding TAP in Kansas is the absence of clear civil liability protections for participating firearm retailers. States such as Arkansas and Louisiana have enacted targeted immunity provisions, resulting in measurable increases in retailer participation and hundreds of stored firearms during periods of risk. Kansas has an opportunity to replicate this success by enabling responsible FFLs to serve as trusted partners in suicide prevention without facing undue legal exposure.

For these reasons, the Kansas CIT Council respectfully urges the Kansas Legislature to adopt legislation that provides reasonable, good-faith civil immunity for voluntary firearm storage through TAP. This initiative will strengthen Kansas' crisis response infrastructure, support gun owners and veterans, and save lives.

Thank you for your continued commitment to public safety and behavioral health in our state.

Respectfully,

The Kansas Law Enforcement CIT Council