

Pro Testimony on HB 2501
Submitted to House Federal and State Affairs Committee
Submitted by Linda Gallagher, Lenexa, KS
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Good morning, Committee. I am testifying in favor of **HB 2501**, which would allow a federal firearms licensee conducting business in Kansas who has entered into a firearm hold agreement to be immune from civil liability for returning the firearm to the owner at the termination of the agreement.

I am a member of the Leadership Team of the Johnson County Suicide Prevention Coalition, which works to empower Johnson County to promote mental wellness and prevent suicide through community collaboration, education and action. At a coalition meeting in October, we heard a presentation about The Armory Project (TAP), which offers voluntary out-of-home firearm storage for those needing to take time and space from their firearms, entering into agreements with trusted firearms dealers and other vetted partners in local communities.

Firearms are the most used method of suicide in Johnson County and Kansas. They account for nearly 60% of suicide deaths in Kansas and 50% of all suicide deaths in Johnson County. This highlights the urgent need for reasonable prevention strategies such as The Armory Project.

Many gun owners may not seek help or appropriate resources during mental health struggles because of stigma and misconceptions about firearm ownership and mental health. Research shows that a suicide attempt often happens within five to 10 minutes of the decision to act. Providing voluntary, temporary firearm storage is an evidence-based approach to reducing suicide risk by creating time and distance between someone experiencing a mental health crisis and a firearm.

This legislation removes a significant legal concern for Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs) in Kansas, allowing more retailers to participate in The Armory Project and expanding access across communities.

Increasing voluntary firearm storage options, especially through trusted partners such as local firearm retailers, honors personal choice and Second Amendment rights, while also strengthening suicide prevention efforts and saving lives.

I ask you to please support HB 2501. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.