

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023**

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**HOUSE BILL 72  
Committee Substitute Favorable 2/15/23**

Short Title: Firearm Safe Storage Awareness Initiative.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 9, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO LAUNCH A STATEWIDE FIREARM SAFE STORAGE AWARENESS  
2 INITIATIVE TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SAFE  
3 STORAGE OF FIREARMS AND TO FACILITATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF GUN  
4 LOCKS.  
5

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Firearm Safe Storage Awareness Initiative. – The Department of  
8 Public Safety (Department), in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services  
9 and the Wildlife Resources Commission (Commission), shall launch a two-year statewide  
10 firearm safe storage awareness initiative to educate the public about the importance of the safe  
11 storage of firearms and to facilitate the distribution of gun locks. The initiative required under  
12 this section shall include the development of (i) the website and toolkit required under Section 2  
13 of this act and (ii) the outreach process required under Section 3 of this act.

14 **SECTION 2.** Development of Website and Toolkit. – The Department shall develop  
15 a website to provide information to the public about (i) the importance of the safe storage of a  
16 firearm, especially with respect to access by children and youth; (ii) methods for safely storing a  
17 firearm; (iii) contact information for obtaining free gun locks, if available; (iv) information on  
18 State laws related to the safe storage of firearms; (v) links to webpages for various resources  
19 related to firearm safety such as resources addressing domestic violence, hunter education, and  
20 suicide prevention; and (vi) access to a toolkit of information that local communities may use to  
21 launch firearm safe storage initiatives at the local level. The toolkit shall provide materials and  
22 resources that may be tailored to a community's needs and used for launching local education  
23 and awareness campaigns, events, and local groups focused on firearm safe storage and the  
24 distribution of free or discounted gun locks. The website and toolkit required under this section  
25 shall be developed by July 1, 2024.

26 **SECTION 3.** Development of State-Coordinated Outreach. – Upon development of  
27 the website and toolkit required under Section 2 of this act, the Department shall develop and  
28 implement an outreach process for disseminating the information and toolkit described in Section  
29 2 of this act to the public and to local communities, as well as the provision of technical assistance  
30 to local communities to assist them in utilizing the toolkit to launch local initiatives.

31 **SECTION 4.** Use of Third-Party Entity. – The Department may contract with a  
32 third-party entity with relevant expertise related to public health and injury prevention to launch  
33 the firearm safe storage awareness initiative required under Section 1 of this act.

34 **SECTION 5.** Prohibition on Advocacy. – The firearm safe storage awareness  
35 initiative required under Section 1 of this act and any State funds used to launch and maintain the  
36 initiative shall not be used to advocate, promote, or lobby for the creation of new or the revision



1 of existing laws regulating firearms. The firearm safe storage awareness initiative and any State  
2 funds used to launch or maintain the initiative shall only be used for the purposes set forth in  
3 Sections 2 through 4 of this act and only to explain and promote existing laws regulating firearms  
4 and best practices for firearm storage and safety.

5 **SECTION 6.** Report. – The Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the  
6 Department of Health and Human Services and the Wildlife Resources Commission, shall submit  
7 a report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services detailing  
8 the progress in meeting the requirements set forth in Section 1 of this act. The report required  
9 under this section shall be submitted by September 1, 2024.

10 **SECTION 7.** Effective Date. – This act becomes effective July 1, 2023.