AB 1974

Voluntary Safe Storage Program

ASSEMBLYMEMBER DISTRICT 19
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SUMMARY

AB 1974 establishes guidelines for law enforcement agencies that choose to create a temporary voluntary safe firearm storage program for the public.

BACKGROUND

Research shows that temporarily separating people in crisis from firearms can significantly reduce suicide and firearm-related injuries or death. Programs involving voluntary off-site storage complement existing legal remedies including domestic violence restraining orders and child custody protections. While those measures can restrict access to firearms, voluntary storage provides a preventive option for people experiencing temporary challenges or transitions.

In California, under SB 368 (Portantino, 2023), dealers are required to accept for storage a firearm transferred by an individual to prevent it from being accessed or used during periods of crisis or heightened risk to the owner of the firearm or members of their household. Research has shown, however, that the number of dealers offering this service is limited. This deficiency leaves families without a reliable storage option during periods of instability or crisis.

Currently, there is no state guidance for a law enforcement agency seeking to implement a voluntary temporary firearm relinquishment program to address the gap in voluntary, out-of-home storage options left by the low rates of implementation of SB 368.

This program has already seen success locally through a partnership between Pierce's Pledge and the San Francisco Police Department by offering this option at no cost. Jurisdictions like San Francisco, with cooperation from groups like Pierce's Pledge, can now help support families and individuals in reducing the potential risks associated with firearms.

THIS BILL

This bill builds upon the success of a few local jurisdictions who have implemented similar programs that have both improved public safety and given people the flexibility to ensure the safe storage of their firearms during times of uncertainty.

These programs will require participating law enforcement agencies to ensure the firearm being temporarily stored has not been reported as lost, stolen, or otherwise involved in a crime. The person then can request the firearm be returned. If a person, when noticed that the maximum amount of time offered to store the firearm has been reached, the firearm will be destroyed or disposed of according to state law.

This process ensures there are proper procedures to make sure any stored firearm is handled properly with multiple

checks in place so they don't end up in the wrong hands or are returned to someone who may no longer legally own a firearm.

SUPPORT

- **GIFFORDS (Sponsor)**
- Brady California
- Brady United Against Gun Violence
- California District Attorneys Association
- City and County of San Francisco

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