



SPONSOR: Rep. Matthews & Rep. Bush & Rep. Longhurst & Rep. K. Williams & Sen. S. McBride & Sen. Townsend
Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Bentz, Brady, Briggs King, Chukwuocha, Collins, Dorsey Walker, Heffernan, Hensley, K. Johnson, Kowalko, Lambert, Lynn, Mitchell, Osienski, D. Short, Michael Smith, Spiegelman; Sens. Ennis, Hansen, Hocker, Mantzavinos, Paradee, Pettyjohn, Poore, Sokola, Walsh, Wilson

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 55

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 16 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE GUN SHOP PROJECT.

1 WHEREAS, suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States, at a rate of 12.6 deaths per 100,000 of the
2 population in Delaware; and

3 WHEREAS, firearms are used in less than 6% of suicide attempts, but firearms are used in over half of suicide
4 deaths; and

5 WHEREAS, of the most commonly used methods of self-harm, firearms are by far the most lethal, with a fatality
6 rate of approximately 85%; and

7 WHEREAS, the national suicide rate has generally increased 19% over the past decade, with a 61% increase
8 specifically among children and teens; and

9 WHEREAS, although there may be warning signs leading up to a suicide attempt, almost half of all survivors
10 report less than 10 minutes of deliberation between the thought of suicide and the actual suicide attempt; the method used to
11 disrupt this moment of crisis can therefore mean the difference between life and death; and

12 WHEREAS, the New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition, a group of mental health and public health
13 practitioners, firearm retailers, and firearm rights advocates, created what is now known as "The Gun Shop Project," which
14 included developing materials with and for firearm retailers and range owners on ways they can help prevent suicide; and

15 WHEREAS, the objectives of The Gun Shop Project are to share guidelines on how to avoid selling or renting a
16 firearm to a suicidal customer and encourage gun stores and firing ranges to display and distribute suicide prevention
17 materials tailored to their customers; and

18 WHEREAS, half of the gun shops in New Hampshire are disseminating the materials, and the project is now
19 nationwide, with at least 21 states participating in the project in 1 form or another; and

20 WHEREAS, it is time for Delaware to join the project and work to prevent suicide by firearm through meaningful
21 suicide education and awareness.

22 NOW, THEREFORE:

23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

24 Section 1. Amend § 6201, Title 16 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
25 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

26 § 6201. The Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition; mission, composition, organization, and reporting.

27 (b) The Coalition shall do all of the following:

28 (1) ~~review~~ Review and analyze statistics and patterns related to suicide and suicide ~~attempts, and~~ attempts.

29 (2) ~~shall consult~~ Consult with the Division of Public Health to determine the prevalence of ~~suicide, and~~
30 suicide.

31 (3) ~~to implement~~ Implement methods to reduce suicide and attempts.

32 (4) ~~Additionally, the Coalition shall operate~~ Operate in accordance with the State of Delaware Suicide
33 Prevention Plan.

34 (5) Manage the Gun Shop Project and comply with § 6202 of this title.

35 (f) The Coalition shall report to the General Assembly and the Governor annually with findings and any pertinent
36 ~~recommendations~~ recommendations, including the information required under § 6202(e) of this title.

37 Section 2. Amend Chapter 62, Title 16 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
38 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

39 § 6202. The Delaware Gun Shop Project.

40 (a) The Delaware Gun Shop Project is established, and referred to throughout this chapter as “the Gun Shop
41 Project”.

42 (b) Definitions.

43 As used in this chapter:

44 (1) “Deadly weapon” means as defined under § 222 of Title 11.

45 (2) “Firearm” means as defined under § 222 of Title 11.

46 (3) “Gun shop” means a business located in this State that sells firearms, deadly weapons, or related projects,
47 such as ammunition.

48 (b) The Coalition shall oversee the Gun Shop Project. The Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health shall
49 provide staff for the Gun Shop Project.

50 (c) Educational materials.

51 (1) The Gun Shop Project shall develop and create suicide prevention education materials that include all of
52 the following:

53 a. Information on understanding the various clinical signs, symptoms, and indicators that might lead an
54 individual to consider suicide.

55 b. Available suicide prevention resources.

56 (2) The educational materials under paragraph (c)(1) of this section must be provided through all of the
57 following methods:

58 a. Written materials, such as a pamphlet, sign, poster, tip sheet, or other medium that meets the
59 requirements of this chapter and the Gun Shop Project determines is appropriate.

60 b. An online training course for deadly weapons dealers licensed under Chapter 9 of Title 24 and other
61 customers.

62 (3) The Gun Shop Project shall refer to all of the following for guidance in developing and creating the
63 educational materials under this section:

64 a. Gun shop projects of other states.

65 b. Industry projects, such as the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

66 c. Other projects or organizations that the Gun Shop Project determines is appropriate.

67 (4) The Gun Shop Project shall ensure that the written educational materials under paragraph (2)a. of this
68 section are made available for distribution through all of the following:

69 a. A gun shop, to distribute the materials at the point of purchase to at least all of the following:

70 1. An individual who is purchasing a firearm from a gun shop.

71 2. An individual who is licensed or applying to be licensed in this State to carry a concealed deadly
72 weapon.

73 b. Another organization or location that the Gun Shop Project determines is appropriate.

74 (5) The Gun Shop Project shall ensure that the written educational materials under paragraph (c)(1) of this
75 section are available on the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health's website for downloading and access.

76 (e) The Gun Shop Project shall submit a written report as part of the Coalition's annual report under this chapter,
77 with a copy submitted to the Director and the Librarian of the Division of Research of Legislative Council. The annual
78 report must include all of the following:

79 (1) Progress of the Gun Shop Project.

80 (2) Number of participating deadly weapons dealers.

SYNOPSIS

In 2009, New Hampshire was the first state to develop a statewide "Gun Shop Project," reaching out to gun shops regarding the role they can play in suicide prevention. In the years since, at least 21 other states have implemented similar campaigns. This Act establishes the Delaware Gun Shop Project.

The Gun Shop Project's primary purpose is to develop, create, and provide suicide prevention education materials and training, to be made available for dealers and consumers of licensed deadly weapons in Delaware. The Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition will oversee the Gun Shop Project and include the Project's annual report in the Coalition's annual report. The Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, which staff the Coalition, will staff the Gun Shop Project.

This Act also makes technical corrections to conform existing law to the standards of the Delaware Legislative Drafting Manual.