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LD 1299

Please support LD 1299

This is a common sense bill that will save lives.

- **Reduced Flow of Crime Guns:** Storing a firearm in a locked, hard-sided container within the vehicle minimizes the likelihood that it could be accessed by an unauthorized user or stolen from the vehicle. Stolen firearms have nine times the likelihood of being used in crimes as opposed to legally bought and sold firearms. Securely storing firearms in vehicles is likely to significantly reduce the flow of crime guns.

- o Stolen firearms are attractive to illegal markets, where they can be sold to people who cannot legally purchase firearms, including those with histories of violent acts.

- **Preventing Firearm Theft:** Keeping the firearm and its storage container out of plain sight decreases crimes of opportunity in which an individual might break into a vehicle solely to obtain a visible firearm. These laws can help protect gun owners from car break ins and theft that may be facilitated or caused by a viewable firearm in the vehicle.

- o More than half (51%) of gun thefts in 2022 involved firearms stolen from vehicles.

- o Gun thefts from cars are the largest source of stolen guns.

- **Less Fatal Road Rage:** Storing firearms out of sight and reach of passengers can minimize the accessibility of firearms that might be used accidentally or to escalate a situation. Between 2014-2023, the number of people shot in road rage incidents increased by more than 400%. Removing firearms from high stress situations such as these can help reduce firearm injury and death.

- **Similar Laws in Other States:** Five states—California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, and New York—as well as DC, require firearms to be securely stored in motor vehicles.

- **Inclusion of Exemptions:** This policy includes exemptions, including for gun owners engaged in lawful hunting activities. The penalties for violations of secure storage requirements will not apply if an individual's firearm is stolen from their vehicle and they comply fully with the state's lost and stolen firearm reporting requirements.

- **Civil Penalties:** Penalties for violation of the law are civil, not criminal.

- **Constitutionality:** Second Amendment challenges to safe storage laws have been repeatedly rejected by the courts. Additionally, requiring secured storage of firearms in vehicles would not interfere with actions protected by Maine's permitless carry law.