

SENATE BILL NO. 496

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice

on January 26, 2026)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Marsden)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 18.2-308.7:1, relating to secure storage of handguns; unattended locked vehicle; penalty.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 18.2-308.7:1 as follows:*****§ 18.2-308.7:1. Secure storage of handguns in unattended vehicles; penalty.******A. For purposes of this subsection:****"Handgun" has the same meaning as ascribed to "firearm" in subsection F of § 18.2-308.2:2.*

"Vehicle" has the same meaning as ascribed to "motor vehicle" in § 46.2-364. A "boat" is considered a vehicle and is defined as any vessel or other watercraft, privately owned, whether moved by oars, paddles, sails, or other power mechanism, inboard or outboard, or any other vessel or structure floating on water in the Commonwealth, whether or not capable of self-locomotion, including cruisers, cabin cruisers, runabouts, houseboats and barges. However, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, electric power-assisted bicycles, motorized skateboards or scooters, and mopeds are not vehicles.

B. No person shall knowingly leave a handgun in an unattended locked vehicle or trunk unless such handgun is in a locked hard-sided container that is placed out of plain view, including a locked container that is permanently affixed to the vehicle's interior. A locked container permanently affixed to the vehicle's interior does not include the glove compartment or center console. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor.

C. The provisions of this section shall not apply to (i) any person in lawful possession of a firearm who is carrying such firearm on or about his person, (ii) the storage of any antique firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2, or (iii) a law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101.

D. This section shall not apply to a person with a disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2), who stores a handgun in a locked soft-sided container in an unattended locked vehicle.