



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Assemblymember Anderson & Senator Hoylman-Sigal Join Gun Violence Prevention Advocates to Introduce New Safe Storage Legislation “Francesco’s Law”

SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL & ASSEMBLYMEMBER KHALEEL ANDERSON January 28, 2025

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Albany, NY — Assemblymember Khaleel Anderson (D, WFP - Queens) and State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal (D, WFP - Manhattan) joined gun control advocates from Francesco’s Foundation, Everytown for Gun Safety, Brady, GIFFORDS Law Center, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence, Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action and Newton Action Alliance to announce the introduction of their new legislation to mandate secure storage of firearms and hold those who do not do so accountable ([A.1962/S.3385](#)).

The legislation is named after Francesco, a 17 year old New Yorker who took his own life after gaining access to an unsecured firearm. The introductory event was held on January 28th, what would have been Francesco’s 21st birthday, on the Million Dollar Staircase at the New York State Capitol in Albany. The legislation, which would bring New York State in line with the gold standard for secure storage legislation, is intended to help prevent tragedies like the one experienced by Francesco and his family.

**About Francesco’s Law:**

Francesco's Law focuses on prevention and promotes cultural change while ensuring accountability for extreme negligence. Key provisions include:

- **Secure Storage Requirements:** Mandating that all firearms be secured with locked containers, trigger locks, or other safety devices when not under an owner's immediate control. There are escalating penalties for failure to securely store firearms if there is a minor or person prohibited from owning a firearm in the home, if such a person actually accesses the firearm, and if harm results from that access.
- **Accountability Measures:** Class C felony provisions apply only in extreme cases when access by a minor or other prohibited person results in a fatality.

### **The Need for Change**

- 4.6 million children in the U.S. live in households with unsecured, loaded, guns.
- LGBTQ youth are 4-5 times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers.
- In states with Child Access Prevention laws, there is a proven decrease in accidental shootings and suicides involving firearms. This bill will strengthening and expanding NY's storage law to be among the best in class in the US.

- Approximately 76% of school shooters acquire firearms from their own homes or those of relatives or friends.
- In 2022, CDC recorded that the first time on the record firearm suicide rate among black children and teen exceeded that of white children and teens
- A 2019 U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center Report on targeted school violence found that planned incidents perpetrated by current or former students using weapons had been obtained for the specific purpose of causing others harm at school.

### **About Francesco**

Francesco was a brilliant, happy, kind, and talented young man who grew up in Southampton, New York. An honors student fluent in English and Italian, he performed violin at Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra and achieved a remarkable SAT score of 1520. But despite his accomplishments, Francesco's life was tragically cut short on October 21, 2021, when relentless bullying over his bisexuality at the Stony Brook Prep School and access to an unsecured firearm from his second home led him to take his life. He took his life in the early hours of October 21st, 2021 after biking to Little Plains Beach in Southampton with a shotgun in his backpack. He was only 17 years old. His last words, found on his phone, read: "Goodbye, oh world of insurmountable beauty."

"Francesco's death was not inevitable—it was preventable," said **Diana Cochran, Francesco's mother and cofounder of Francesco's Foundation.** "This law isn't about punishment; it's about

**prevention**". Safe gun storage should be as automatic as buckling a seatbelt or installing a smoke detector. We owe it to our children to create a culture of safety and responsibility. I would not want any other family to suffer in the way my family has and I know had this law been enacted while Francesco was alive he would be here today." "This isn't just a legal issue; it's a community issue," **Cochran added**. "Gun owners want to protect their families, and safe storage practices help achieve that goal. Together, we can make safe gun storage a cultural norm and save lives."

"Today, on Francesco's 21st birthday, I join Diana Cochran and Jennifer Allsop in urging my elected colleagues to pass Francesco's Law," **said Assemblymember Khaleel Anderson**. "Secure gun storage is essential for protecting children and families from preventable tragedies. From 2016 to 2021, 36% of firearm deaths among children aged 10 to 19 were suicides. Moreover, 66% of unintentional fatal shootings of children occurred when the shooter was playing with or showing the gun to another person. These tragic statistics are linked to negligent storage. We must pass Francesco's Law to honor Francesco and the countless other victims of gun violence."

**Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said**: "Since 2015 there have been over 3,500 unintentional shootings by children, resulting in over 1300 needless deaths. Many of these shootings have been able to occur because the guns these children used were not properly stored in their own homes. That's why Assemblymember Anderson and I have introduced Francesco's Law (S.3385) to bring New York's secure gun storage law up to the gold standard met by other states like California and Massachusetts, by requiring all gun owners to securely store their guns when they are not being used or carried. Studies have shown that households that lock up their guns and ammunition have an 85 percent lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens. Francesco's law, named for a young New Yorker who lost his life because of an improperly stored firearm, will help save lives and make all New

Yorkers safer.”

“Francesco’s Law will provide lifesaving protections for our children and young adults from the tragic consequences of unsecured firearms,” said **Assemblymember Rebecca A. Seawright, co-sponsor of the bill**. “I am proud to co-sponsor, with Assembly Member Cunningham, this critical legislation introduced by Assembly Member Anderson. The data could not be clearer: A teen in the United States takes their life with a firearm every 7 hours; they are less likely to attempt suicide if the firearm is inaccessible. The status quo cannot stand. This bill provides a common-sense solution that will protect young New Yorkers.”

“We have some of the strongest gun safety laws in the country here in New York – but a comprehensive secure storage law has been one of the missing pieces to keep our communities safe,” said **Jimmy Dougherty, a volunteer with the New York chapter of Moms Demand Action**. “Secure storage promotes common sense, responsible gun ownership that keeps guns out of the hands of children and other unauthorized users – and it saves lives. Alongside our gun sense champions and other gun safety advocates today, we’re working towards a safer future where our communities have the necessary tools to prevent tragic instances of gun violence.”

“As the leading cause of death for children and teens in the United States, firearm injuries demand urgent, bold action. ‘Francesco’s Law’ is a critical step in addressing the devastating consequences of unsecured firearms, especially in homes and vehicles where minors or prohibited persons can access them’, said **Carol Wakeman, a Board Member of Newtown Action Alliance**. “If the Sandy Hook shooter’s mother safely secured her AR-15 then 26 children and educators would still be alive today. With 76% of school shooters accessing guns from their own homes or relatives’ homes, safe storage laws like this are essential to saving our children’s lives and protecting our communities. We applaud the introduction of this common-sense measure and urge lawmakers to prioritize the safety of our children and

families by passing 'Francesco's Law' without delay.”

“Time and again, we’ve seen the devastating consequences of not having strong safe storage laws. Too many families have endured the heartbreak of losing loved ones because firearms were too easily accessible,” said **Sean Holihan, GIFFORDS** State Legislative Affairs and Law Enforcement Director. “New York needs comprehensive legislation to prevent tragedies involving firearms. With guns now the leading cause of death among our youth, it’s time for leaders to pass Francesco’s Law and prioritize protecting lives.”

“Secure storage laws save lives. Period. With 30 million children living in homes with guns, firearms must be stored securely – locked, unloaded, and separate from ammunition,” **Kris Brown, President, Brady**. “If just 50% of households with children switched from keeping their guns unlocked to storing all firearms locked, more than 200 youth suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented each year. Not only will secure storage laws help protect our children, they will help decrease instances of firearm suicide and firearm theft. Brady is deeply grateful for Diana and Jennifer's work in honor of Francesco in creating Francesco’s Law, which will mandate safe storage and protect young folks. Securely stored firearms should be the norm, and with Francesco’s Law, we are one step closer to changing the culture surrounding firearm storage.”

“There is so much more that can be done to protect our children from gun violence and requiring safe storage of guns is one important part of the solution,” said **Rebecca Fischer, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence**. “Francesco’s law will prevent suicides, unintentional shootings, mass shootings, domestic violence, and community violence. New York has always led on strong gun laws, whether we’ve had champions in Washington DC or not. And NOW, we know that we are dealing with a White House that is working against our needs and wants more guns in our schools, homes, and streets. Now is the time that NY leaders must step up again and do what is right for our survivors, for our children, for our

families, and for all New Yorkers.”

Francesco’s Foundation is calling on lawmakers, educators, healthcare providers, and community leaders to support Francesco’s Law and join the movement for safer, more responsible gun ownership. The Foundation is also urging all New Yorkers to advocate for the passage of this life-saving legislation.

### **About Francesco’s Foundation**

Francesco’s Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing gun violence and supporting marginalised youth. Founded in memory of Francesco, the Foundation focuses on advocacy, education, and community engagement to create a safer, more inclusive future for all children.

For more information on Francesco’s Law or to get involved, please visit

[francescosfoundation.org](https://francescosfoundation.org).

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