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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 section:

"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 vehicle or trunk unless such handgun is placed out of plain view in a locked hard-sided container, including a locked glove compartment or locked center console, permanently affixed to the vehicle's interior. 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, (iii) a law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101, or (iv) a person who reports the theft or loss of such firearm to a law-enforcement agency as provided in § 18.2-287.5.

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.

SENATE SUBSTITUTE

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