



For Immediate Release

March 4, 2019

For Information Contact:
Eileen McCarron 303-946-6959 or 303-377-7697

www.coloradoceasefire.org

House Approves Bill on Extreme Risk Protection Orders

DENVER – The Colorado House on Monday gave final approval, by a 38-to-25 vote, to HB19-1177. The Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO) bill would enable families and law enforcement to seek protection orders to temporarily remove firearms from people who are dangerous to themselves and others. If enacted, the law would reduce gun violence and firearm suicides in the state. The bill is named the Deputy Zackari Parrish, III, Violence Prevention Act in memory of Deputy Parrish, who was shot and killed in an ambush a year ago.

“ERPO can prevent people who are a threat to the public from causing more tragedies,” said Tom Mauser, Colorado Ceasefire Spokesperson and the father of Daniel Mauser who was one of the 12 Columbine High School students killed in 1999. “When you have lost a loved one to gun violence, as I have, there’s a burning question that haunts you: what could have been done to prevent this?”

“ERPO is something we can do and should do,” said Mauser.

Colorado Ceasefire has been advocating for an extreme risk protection orders law since 2016. The bill now moves to the Colorado Senate for consideration. The Colorado House approved a similar bill last year, but the measure failed in the Republican-controlled Senate. This year, Democrats hold a slim majority in the Senate.

Under ERPO, a family member or law enforcement could ask a civil court judge to temporarily remove firearms from an owner who poses a significant danger to self or others. A hearing would be held within 14 days to determine if the respondent continued to pose a threat. If so, a full 364-day ERPO could be ordered. If not, firearms would be returned to the respondent.

Fourteen other states have enacted similar laws, including Florida and four other Republican controlled states. Nineteen other states are considering ERPO laws this year. Early data show that these bills save lives. For example, in 2018, according to the Associated Press, Maryland’s ERPO bill was used to remove guns in five instances related to schools. In four of those, the threat to students was deemed “significant.”

“Those who contemplate murder, or mass murder, put out warning signs. This bill gives us the chance to act before they do,” said Dr. David Iverson, a Denver psychiatrist who has worked with victims of mass shootings and is on the board of Colorado Ceasefire. “ERPO would give us a chance to make a specific, well-timed intervention in an emergency as it is unfolding. This is an incredibly important and helpful step.”

Colorado Ceasefire, an all-volunteer statewide organization, has been working for freedom from gun violence since 2000. Ceasefire initiated and was instrumental in the enactment of the 2013 Colorado firearms laws, which included universal background checks, a high capacity magazine ban, and domestic violence firearms relinquishment. Ceasefire began advocating for an Extreme Risk law in 2016.

#

--