



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Senate Approves Bill on Extreme Risk Protection Orders**

DENVER - The Colorado Senate, on an 18 to 17 vote, gave final approval to the Extreme Risk Protection Orders bill (HB19-1177) Thursday that will enable law enforcement and families to ask a judge to order the temporary removal of firearms from persons dangerous to themselves and others.

The vote was largely along party lines, with Senate President Leroy Garcia (Pueblo) being the sole Democrat to vote in opposition.

“We at Ceasefire have worked for three years to bring this concept into law, and feel gratified that the Colorado General Assembly has embraced this life-saving measure,” said Eileen McCarron, president of Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action. “This is a significant step for a state that has suffered numerous horrific firearm tragedies,” she continued.

The bill must return to the House of Representatives for concurrence on Senate amendments. Last month, the Colorado House approved the ERPO bill 38-25.

Both Governor Jared Polis and Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser support the bill. Polis has promised to sign the bill into law. Fourteen other states and the District of Columbia have similar laws, which have been found constitutional in two cases. Five Republican governors have signed these measures into law, and twenty other states are considering ERPO laws this year.

“Those who contemplate murder, or mass murder, put out warning signs. This law 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 gives 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.”

A similar bill introduced last year in the Colorado legislature passed the House on a bi-partisan vote, but failed in the Republican-led Senate. Colorado Ceasefire has been

advocating for an extreme risk protection orders bill since 2016 to reduce firearms homicides and suicides in the state.

“ERPO will 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. “It would have been tragic, after listening to all the testimony by victims and survivors, to have this bill fail again.”

Under ERPO, a family member or law enforcement can ask a civil court judge to temporarily remove firearms from an owner who poses a significant danger to self or others. A hearing will be held within 14 days to determine if the firearm owner remains a threat. At that hearing, the owner is represented by an attorney who is provided by the state. If the person continues to pose a threat, a full 364-day ERPO could be ordered. If not, firearms would be returned to the owner.

HB 1177 is named the “Deputy Zackari Parrish, III, Gun Violence Prevention Act,” in honor of the Douglas County Deputy Sheriff gunned down in an ambush a little over a year ago. The shooter's own mother tried and failed to remove his guns. This bill, when signed into law, will give families and law enforcement a valuable tool to use in such cases.

State Reps. Alec Garnett (D-Denver) and Tom Sullivan (D-Centennial) sponsored the bill in the House and State Sens. Lois Court (D-Denver) and Brittany Pettersen (D-Lakewood) sponsored the bill in the Senate.

“I’ve heard a lot of talk about second amendment rights. But we, as patriotic citizens, have a responsibility to uphold another part of the constitution – the preamble which charges its citizens with the responsibility to “insure domestic tranquility,” said Mike Heyka, a supporter of the Second Amendment and co-founder of the non-profit Colorado Gun Owners for Safety.

“It is time for Colorado to rise up and take on the responsibility our founding fathers charged us with to ensure domestic tranquility while maintaining the rights enshrined within the Second Amendment,” said Heyka.

*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.*

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