



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Extreme Risk Protection Orders: Preventing Gun Violence & Suicide in Wisconsin

MADISON— Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) issued the following statement to announce the introduction of LRB-4383/1, relating to extreme risk protection temporary orders and injunctions:

“Everyone in our state deserves to live without the fear of gun violence, and without losing a loved one to suicide. Yet, for far too many people here in Wisconsin, our lives continued to be touched by the tragedies of firearm related deaths, and by fear. Our children are afraid to go back to school. As a society, we are afraid that any public place could be invaded by the sound of gunfire. This should not be the new normal, but it has become our sad reality. Continued inaction is complacency, and we cannot continue to stand idly by as our communities struggle to adapt to a world in which gun violence is accepted as the new norm. We know that Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) have saved the lives of many innocent men, women, and children in other states— the time for Wisconsin to act is now, and I am proud to introduce this life saving piece of legislation in our state.

ERPO legislation is crucial for Wisconsin. Many of us, myself included, have faced situations in which one of our loved ones is in crisis. With few options to take meaningful action to help prevent these loved ones from harming themselves, or others, Wisconsin is not currently using all the tools available to help save lives. Fortunately, due to the real examples we have seen in other states, we know that ERPOs have a significant impact in preventing tragedy. [Connecticut](#), for example, has seen a 14% reduction in firearm suicide rates after the implementation of ERPO legislation, while [Indiana](#) has seen a 7.5% reduction. Further, in states like Maryland, California, Florida, and others, ERPO laws have proven successful in preventing [multiple cases](#) of school violence and mass shooting incidences.

In addition to preserving public safety and preventing tragedy from occurring in our communities, ERPOs also work to ensure necessary due process and respect for responsible gun owners. LRB-4383/1 creates an extreme risk protection temporary order that mirrors existing temporary restraining order (TRO) and injunction processes in our state, such as those for domestic violence. Under this process, families and law enforcement officers are provided the opportunity to petition a court to **temporarily** prevent the person from possessing a firearm, should a judge find that they are substantially likely to injure themselves or another person. This ERPO injunction would be effective for up to one year, but the respondent would have the opportunity to petition to vacate the injunction. Further, this legislation protects responsible gun owners by ensuring that any individual who petitions for an Extreme Risk Protection Order knowing the information to be false or with the intent to harass, is subject to prosecution for false swearing— a Class H Felony— as we do not have to choose between preserving the 2nd Amendment and preventing gun violence in our communities.

We know that ERPOs have garnered a wide breadth of public support. Actors from the [NRA](#), [GOP lawmakers](#), and [President Trump](#), to [doctors](#), [social workers](#), and [business owners](#) have shared that they recognize the merits of ERPO legislation. In addition, [over 80%](#) of Wisconsinites, including gun owners, have consistently supported ERPO laws. This is not a partisan issue. This is an issue of saving lives. This is a matter of life and death.

It is well past time to listen to the voices of the people of Wisconsin and take meaningful action to prevent gun violence in our state. I welcome my Republican colleagues to join me in this vital mission to save lives in Wisconsin.”

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Melissa Sargent is a State Representative in the Wisconsin Assembly, representing the 48th Assembly District, which covers the east and north sides of the city of Madison and the village of Maple Bluff