



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **Extreme Risk Protection Orders save Lives**

Democratic Weekly Radio Address

By Rep. Melissa Sargent (D-Madison)

[Audio File of Radio Address](#)

Hello this is State Representative Melissa Sargent with this week's Democratic Radio Address.

Last week I was proud to stand with Governor Tony Evers, Attorney General Josh Kaul, and State Senator Lena Taylor as we introduced a bill creating a temporary extreme risk protection order, also known as ERPO, in Wisconsin.

Under the ERPO process, if an individual is likely to injure themselves or another person, a family member or law enforcement officer, may petition a court to temporarily prevent the individual from possessing a firearm. An ERPO injunction would be effective for up to one year, and could be extended by petition for periods if the court believes the person continues to be at risk.

As a member of the Speaker's Task Force on Suicide Prevention, I have heard story after story from people whose lives have been personally impacted by suicide in our state.

At each of the six hearings held throughout Wisconsin, these individuals overwhelmingly asked the Task Force to take action to reduce suicide deaths in our state, specifically with sensible policies such as Extreme Risk Protection Orders. Yet, the recommendations released by the Speaker's Task Force this week have failed to listen to the will of the people. By refusing to comprehensively address suicide by firearm, and ignoring the importance of ERPOs, the Task Force's work cannot be considered complete.

Thanks to legislation passed in many other states, we also know the real results that ERPOs have had in reducing suicide rates by firearm and in saving lives.

In Indiana, in the 10 years after the state passed its Extreme Risk law in 2005, the state's firearm suicide rate decreased by 7.5 percent.

People across Wisconsin, regardless of whether or not they are a gun owner, want to see meaningful action. We don't have to choose between upholding the 2nd Amendment and preventing gun violence in our communities. There is no excuse for inaction.

It is well past time to listen to the voices of the people of Wisconsin and take meaningful action to prevent gun violence and suicide deaths in our state. The time for action is now, and I am proud to continue fighting for this life saving measure.

Thank you.