

Extreme Risk Protection Orders

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the committee. My name is Sue Kistenmacher, and I live in Farmingdale. I am here to testify in support of The Citizens Referendum Question: An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act.

ERPO laws are based on evidence and modelled after other successful protection orders, such as those for domestic violence.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders are valuable tools because they:

- are temporary
- civil not criminal laws
- based on behavior not mental illness.
- Allow both family members, who usually know the individual best, and law enforcement to petition the court to temporarily remove firearms from someone who in crisis

Our current Yellow Flag law have been shown to be cumbersome and ineffective in part because it doesn't provide for family members to be involved

ERPO laws have been implemented in 21 states and data that has been collected is very positive.

ERPO laws have been used to disarm people who threaten mass shootings and ERPO laws have proven to reduce suicide.

(Early evaluation of ERPO laws indicate that for every 10-20 ERPOs ordered, 1 suicide is prevented.)

Under ERPO laws, both family members and law enforcement have more tools to intervene quickly before a crisis becomes a tragedy.

ERPO will not eliminate all gun violence in Maine but it is one legal element in a toolkit of policies that will save lives.

Finally, I worked to collect signatures for the Citizen's Referendum and I want to share what I observed:

-people were overwhelmingly supportive. They are happy to see that we are doing something to reduce gun violence and glad that we are giving this question to the people of Maine to decide.

I urge your support for, the True Extreme Risk Protection Order.