

## **Extreme Risk Protection Order: An opportunity to reduce suicide and domestic violence**

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**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** Extreme Risk Protection Orders/Mental Health Professionals, Primary Care Providers

**ABSTRACT:** Oregon legislature is poised to pass a law (SB 719) that provides an opportunity for families and law enforcement to prevent suicide and reduce violence by temporarily disarming people who show signs of harming self or others. SB 719 is an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) bill. If passed, ERPO will permit temporary dispossession of firearms of a person in acute emotional crisis. ERPOs (also called Gun Violence Restraining Orders or GVROs) allow family members and law enforcement to petition a court to authorize temporary removal of guns when a person's behavior might lead to violence or self harm. ERPOs also prohibit purchases of guns for the order's duration.<sup>1</sup> Eighty percent of people considering suicide give some type of warning signal of their intent to commit suicide.<sup>2</sup> Out of 62 mass shootings in the past 20 years, 38 of the shooters displayed signs of dangerous mental health problems prior to the killings.<sup>3</sup> Researchers have found that people who commit certain acts of violence or self harm are significantly more likely to commit additional acts of violence. Such red flags are an opportunity to interrupt violence<sup>4</sup> reducing suicide and preventing gun tragedies.

<sup>1</sup> Gun Violence Restraining Orders: Promising Strategy to Reduce Gun Violence in the U.S., Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research, May 20, 2015

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/suicide>

<sup>3</sup> Mark Follman, Mass Shootings: Maybe What We Need Is a Better Mental-Health Policy, Mother Jones, Nov. 9, 2012, available at <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/11/jared-loughner-mass-shootings-mental-illness>

<sup>4</sup> Consortium for Risk-Based Firearms Policy, Guns, Public Health, and Mental Illness: An Evidence-Based Approach for State Policy 7-8, 22 (Dec. 2013), at <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-policy-and-research/publications/GPHMI-State.pdf>

### **OBJECTIVE(S):**

- Explain what an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO).
- Describe the process to obtain an ERPO.
- Discuss situations in which an ERPO might prevent violence.
- Name some of the warning signs of violence.

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