

February 2, 2023

Members of the Public Safety Committee of the Minnesota House of Representatives,

My name is Christopher Carita. I am a Threat Response Detective with 17 years of experience, serving currently with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department, and formerly with the NYPD. I am also a Bloomberg Fellow, holding a master's degree in Public Health, and a Master Trainer in Threat Evaluation and Reporting under the Department of Homeland Security. I write to you today to wholeheartedly endorse the adoption of an Extreme Risk Protection Order Law in the State of Minnesota.

In my role as a Threat Response Detective, I am tasked with assessing and mitigating threats of mass violence in our city. Many of the people who engage in these heinous acts demonstrate recognizable, articulable, dangerous behaviors, that are indicative of someone on a pathway to violence – yet they are still able to legally access or purchase the firearms they use to carry out these attacks. Extreme Risk Protection Orders are an invaluable tool that allow Law Enforcement to intervene, remove firearms, and mitigate these potential tragedies.

We have also successfully used ERPO's to intervene in threats of retaliatory community violence, domestic violence, and to safeguard people experiencing suicidal ideation. The families of the Respondents have been incredibly grateful to have a way to prevent their loved one from committing an act of gun violence, often avoiding the need for criminal charges. In my cases, most of the Respondents come to recognize their crisis, the danger that firearms pose in that crisis, and decide to stipulate to the ERPO.

I understand that there may be concerns about the implementation of ERPOs and the potential for abuse by law enforcement. However, in my experience, the due process protections built into the law are comprehensive and effective. I must swear out an affidavit, present evidence to a judge, swear to that evidence in court, and argue my case against the evidence presented by the Respondent. I do not take these responsibilities lightly, and I believe my fellow officers in Minnesota would take the responsibility just as seriously.

Every officer has left a call in their career where they knew they would be back, and it would likely be a tragedy next time. They recognized the dangers of leaving the firearms behind but had no legal mechanism to intervene. ERPOs are a vital tool for filling this gap in an officer's ability to prevent gun violence. They need this tool.

I urge you to support the adoption of an ERPO law in Minnesota. This law will save lives and make our communities safer. I would be happy to provide more information and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



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