



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Fight like Hell for the Living: Bipartisan Legislative Action needed to Save Lives**

MADISON – Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) released the following statement in response to the tragic mass shootings that have taken place in recent days:

“Our children are dying. Our friends and neighbors are dying. At the grocery store. At the bar. At school. At the movies. At church. Our communities are grieving. Broken. Lost. There are truly no words that can make sense of these heinous mass murders. Nothing can undo the loss of innocent lives that our country has faced in the last week—or over the last many years as we have witnessed mass shootings take place one after the other, with little to no action. Although we cannot change the past, we must continue, today and every day, to fight like hell for the living. To fight to bring overdue change, and to ensure that these horrors no longer continue to be our reality. We cannot continue to stand idly by as our community members are murdered by senseless acts of gun violence.

So, where do we go from here? We listen to the voices of the people of our state—who are afraid, grieving for our country, and who want to see significant action taken to prevent mass shootings from occurring here at home in our Wisconsin communities. As legislators, it is our duty to find common ground, to work with one another, and to take meaningful steps to reduce violence and hatred here in Wisconsin.

One piece of legislation I am proud to be the lead author on, and look forward to reintroducing this session, is an Extreme Risk Protection Order ([2017 AB 1051](#)). This legislation, which garnered bipartisan support last session, provides a pragmatic solution that upholds the rights of gun owners, while simply putting the concern of firearm safety directly in the hands of those closest to an individual who may be a harm to themselves or others. Too often, we are presented with the false dichotomy that we must choose between preserving the Second Amendment and supporting responsible gun ownership—Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) legislation works to proactively prevent tragic shootings and suicides from occurring, while ensuring necessary due process and respect for responsible gun owners.

Fortunately, ERPO legislation has gained a wide breadth of bipartisan support, with proponents ranging from the [NRA](#) and [GOP lawmakers](#), to [doctors](#) and [social workers](#). In fact, just today, [President Trump agreed](#) that: ‘We must make sure that those judged to pose a grave risk to public safety do not have access to firearms, and that if they do those firearms can be taken through rapid due process. That is why I have called for Red Flag Laws also known as Extreme Risk Protection Orders.’ By allowing those closest to an individual in distress to take proactive steps to prevent gun violence and firearm suicides, ERPOs have saved the lives of many innocent men, women, and children in other states, and it is time for Wisconsin to act.

I want to make sure that everyone in our community can live without the fear of gun violence, which unfortunately is not the case today. As such, I am committed to continuing to work on ERPO legislation and other sensible measures to reduce and prevent gun violence in our state, and look forward to having my colleagues across the aisle join me in this commitment.”

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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*