

Submitter: Andy Harris
On Behalf Of: Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3074

My name is Andy Harris, and I'm testifying in support of HB 3074 for Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility. On average, 466 people in Oregon die by gun suicide each year.

Oregon passed an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO), or red flag law, in 2017. In the first six years that the law has been in effect (2018-2023) approximately 2,796 gun suicides have occurred in Oregon. But according to a recent (3-22-25) article in the British Medical Journal, suicide risk was identified in only 516 ERPO petitions during those same years. (R Valek et al, OHSU, BJM, 2025) In other words, suicides occurred 5½ times more frequently than ERPO petitions were filed.

The reality is that the current ERPO law is not reaching vulnerable Oregonians who go on to commit suicide. The current law allows family or household members and law enforcement officers to petition courts for a civil order that prevents a person who has demonstrated a significant risk of harm to themselves or others from accessing firearms.

It is reasonable to ask whether Oregon's ERPO law could be improved to reduce the number of suicides? HB 3074 aims to do just that. The bill before this committee would make Extreme Risk Prevention Orders more likely to be implemented by:

- Adding ex-partners or those with shared custody of a child as eligible petitioners.
- Standardizing statewide training of law enforcement to give them more complete information on the implementation of ERPOs.
- Requiring that weapons be physically removed after a judge issues an ERPO.

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility urges this committee to strengthen Oregon's red flag law so that it does what the legislature intended back in 2017, i.e. to reduce suicides and homicides in Oregon.

Andy Harris, MD