

Re: Senate Bill 868 Extreme Risk Protective Order (ERPO)

Sen. Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
900 Court St. NE, Salem 97301

Chair Prozanski, Members of the Committee: Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of Senate Bill 868, the Extreme Risk Protection Order.

I am Robert Yuille, founding board member of Gun Owners For Responsible Ownership (GOFRO), and a member of the advisory committee for the Oregon Coalition for Common Sense. I am also a veteran, a gun owner and a Registered Nurse. Gun violence is a public health crisis, and the most effective approach to public health and safety is through prevention. Senate Bill 868 will prevent death and injury.

Most people think of homicides when they hear the term gun violence, but statistical data for Oregon from 2010 through 2014 indicates that a large majority--nearly 90%--of gun deaths actually occurred by suicide, and firearm homicide occurs most often in the context of intimate partner violence and gang violence.

Other states have seen similar trends, and have acted to correct this alarming issue. California enacted an extreme risk protective law in 2014, and Washington voters passed this same type of law last November with an overwhelming majority.

Tragically, we have learned from previous events around the country that family and law enforcement are often aware that someone may be a danger to themselves or others before any violence occurs, but have lacked the tools needed to appropriately address the issue.

Senate Bill 868 would allow families and household members to work with law enforcement to temporarily remove guns and prevent the purchase of new guns by individuals who pose a high risk of harm to themselves or others. It would provide time to de-escalate a crisis and serve as a pathway for suicide intervention.

Some might argue that there is potential for these protective orders to be abused, but this bill is based on the current and long-standing procedure of domestic violence protection orders, which require that clear, cogent, and convincing evidence is presented to a judge to determine whether an individual is a risk to themselves or others. In addition, the subject of the order will have an opportunity to refute and present evidence that a protective order is not necessary. The order is temporary and the subject of the order will have the opportunity to petition for termination of the order at any point during the time of the order.

Ladies and gentlemen, as a veteran and a gun owner, I can assure you that Senate Bill 868 protects our second amendment rights of responsible gun ownership. As I said earlier, gun violence is a public health crisis, and the best way to approach public health and safety is through prevention. Senate Bill 868 does just that--it will prevent injury and save lives.

In 2012, my life was forever changed when I lost my wife Cindy to a different kind of gun violence, after she was shot and killed at the Clackamas Town Center shooting. Let's help other

families by giving them a tool to prevent losing their loved ones to gun violence, too.

I would like to thank Senator Burdick and Senator Boquist for their leadership in introducing this important, bipartisan bill. I know that it will save lives and I urge the committee to pass this critical piece of legislation. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Robert Yuille