

Good afternoon Chairman Porter, Committee members, and staff. Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I urge a “do not pass” on HB1411.

I have several years of experience, working with at risk populations; both adults and teens. I understand the multitude of challenges they face. One thing I know for certain is mental health crises and guns don't mix.

- 81% of gun deaths in ND are by gun suicide**
- ND gun suicide rate is nearly 2x that of neighboring MN.**

Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) are an important tool that can be used to keep people safe while in a mental health crisis. This preventative measure allows for family and law enforcement to petition the court for an ERPO if they believe someone is experiencing a mental health crisis. The courts must follow due process and when the ERPO is granted the gun(s) are stored temporarily. We know it works because 21 other states have adopted and utilized this including the District of Columbia.

HB1411 would have a devastating effect on our state.

- It would keep guns in the hands of people experiencing mental health crises.**
- It would make it a felony for law enforcement to implement the law.**

Suicide can often be an impulsive decision and given the accessibility of guns, ERPOs seem to be the best chance we have at protecting lives.

I urge a “do not pass” on this recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kelly M. Ellwein