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New Yorkers Against Gun Violence and Hundreds of Students, Advocates and Legislators Rally for New York to Enact Extreme Risk Protection Orders Bill

--Extreme risk protection orders empower family, household members, and law enforcement to request a court order preventing someone from possessing or purchasing guns if a judge finds they are likely to harm themselves or others.

-- Students and volunteers descend on Albany for over 50 meetings urging legislators to enact ERPOs in New York.

--Students deliver more than 1,000 postcards supporting ERPO collected at the March for Our Lives.

(Albany, NY) May 15, 2018 --Hundreds of student and volunteer activists from New Yorkers Against Gun Violence (NYAGV) rallied in the Capitol Building today with gun violence prevention advocates from across the country and legislators to urge the Senate to pass an extreme risk protection orders (ERPO) bill before the legislative session ends in June.

The students — from communities around the state including all five boroughs of New York City, Long Island, Westchester, the Hudson Valley, Saratoga Springs, Albany, and Buffalo — spoke about how gun violence affects their communities. They held more than 50 meetings with legislators, urging them to support common-sense gun laws like the ERPO bill. Many of the students are part of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence's [ReACTION Youth Program](#) to reduce gun violence.

In addition, the group from NYAGV was joined by members of the New York ERPO Coalition, including Giffords, Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, and New York State Legislators for Gun Violence Prevention. Legislators attending included ERPO bill sponsors Senators Brian Kavanagh and Brad Hoylman and Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon.

"We are proud to be here today with hundreds of youth advocates and volunteers from all different New York communities," said **Rebecca Fischer, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence**. "To protect our families and communities, New York must fill dangerous gaps that remain in our state law and pass Extreme Risk Protection Order legislation. Other states have already passed ERPO laws to empower families and law enforcement to petition a court for the temporary removal of guns from individuals-in-crisis. Now it is time for New York to step forward to remain a leader on gun safety. We urge the New York State Senate to pass this life-saving legislation."

"I am here today to speak up for all those lives that have been lost and current survivors of gun violence," said **Maimouna Camara, student at the Leadership for Public Service High School**.

Gregory Williams, a student at City-As-School High School, added, "This is why it is so important for youth to make sure we fight for this cause. Because we are dying, we have to fight for our lives!"

"It is time to prioritize safety, time to listen to students' voices, time to change what has become the status quo," said **Meghan Hall, youth advocate** from Buffalo. "We cannot allow gun violence to prevail at a time when it is within our control to change our society. It is time to stand up for my upstate community. It is time stand up for all New Yorkers who can't. It is time to stand in solidarity with the students who are asking for change--for reform."

"Our state has some of the strongest gun laws in the country -- and New Yorkers know that common sense laws save lives. That's why it's so important New Yorkers Against Gun Violence and these student advocates are here in the Capitol today," said **New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh**, Chair of New York Legislators for Gun Violence Prevention and co-prime sponsor of the New York ERPO bill. "It's so great so many New Yorkers are joining together, raising their voices, and working to make a difference. Today, Albany is experiencing what we've seen happen across the country: young people stepping up and demanding change. I want these students to know that we are recommitting today to do everything we can to stop gun violence, in every community in this state."

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: "Gun violence is an epidemic of seismic proportions, claiming the lives of over 30,000 Americans each year. While pervasive in its scope, gun violence often disproportionately targets those who need our protection the most: children, people of color, those suffering from mental illness, and LGBTQ individuals. Legislators at every level of government have a responsibility to protect their communities, equally, from this widespread terror. I applaud NYAGV for their determination to address such a critical issue."

"Gun violence is a public health issue that is plaguing our nation, and we should listen to the students in New York State and nationwide who are calling on us to do more to address it. The ERPO bill will help prevent people from harming themselves or others, and help us reduce the heavy toll that gun violence takes on our community. I stand with NYAGV, students from across New York State, and Senators Kavanagh and Hoylman to call for stronger gun violence prevention measures and for the Senate to pass ERPO," said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**, who sponsors ERPO in the Assembly.

"For years, New York has led the way in passing laws to reduce American gun violence," said **Dakota Jablon, policy analyst for the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence**. "By establishing an Extreme Risk Protection Order law, New York would allow family members or law enforcement to petition a court for the removal of guns from an individual who is displaying signs of danger towards themselves or others. Data from Connecticut shows that these laws are effective. The removal of guns from an individual in crisis is a proactive approach to reduce gun deaths -- both homicide and suicide. ERPO-style laws have been passed in the last two months by GOP governors in Florida, Vermont, and Maryland. It is likely to be passed in New Jersey and Massachusetts soon. With only a few weeks left in session, New York should not be left on the sidelines. Albany must take action and provide its citizens this life-saving tool."

"The Extreme Risk Protection Order is a life-saving measure that will help law enforcement and families keep guns out of the hands of someone who poses a risk to themselves or others," said **Nico Bocour, state legislative director for Giffords**. "Following the tragic shooting in Parkland, Florida, several states have taken action to pass extreme risk protection order laws. While the New York Assembly passed this bill months ago, the New York State Senate has yet to act. New York must do more to allow for critical intervention in dangerous situations. We urge the New York State Senate to pass Senator Kavanagh's bill now and show that New York can continue to be a leader on this issue."

"We are thrilled to work with the coalition to help pass this vital ERPO legislation," said **June Rubin, volunteer leader with the New York chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America**. "An Extreme Risk Protection Order law will protect New Yorkers by helping to prevent mass shootings, gun suicides, and other acts of gun violence. We urge the Senate to pass this life saving legislation immediately."

"My friends and I felt so much fear and sadness as we waited to find out exactly what had happened and how many had been killed at my alma mater--Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School," said **Joey Wong, sophomore at Pace University** in NYC and graduate of MSD High School. "We can stop others from experiencing this horror and grief. New York must pass ERPO now to get guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals and prevent these kinds of tragedies from happening again. New Yorkers who marched for our lives just a few months ago expect action on this issue."

About Extreme Risk Protection Orders:

[Bill S7133A/A8976B](#) would create extreme risk protection orders (ERPOs), a new type of court-issued civil order that would prohibit someone from purchasing guns, and require them to temporarily surrender any guns they possess, if a court finds they are likely to harm themselves or others.

An ERPO could be requested by family members, household members, police officers, and district attorneys — who often see warning signs of impending violence but may be powerless to act under current law before a tragedy occurs. Those requesting an order would have to present evidence that an individual is likely to harm themselves or others. The legislation includes strong due process protections, including a prompt hearing to allow the subject of an order to present evidence challenging the order in court. The bill passed the Assembly in June 2017, and again in March 2018 with strong bipartisan support. The Senate bill has 29 co-sponsors, including every member of the Democratic Conference.

Eight other states — Connecticut, Indiana, California, Washington, Oregon, Florida, Vermont, and Maryland — have similar laws. The Florida, Vermont, and Maryland bills were enacted in the wake of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14, 2018.

About the New York ERPO Coalition:

Formed earlier this year, the New York ERPO Coalition includes: ERPO bill sponsors Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senator Brad Hoylman, and Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence, Giffords, Everytown for Gun Safety, the New York Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, New York Legislators for Gun Violence Prevention, Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, Prosecutors Against Gun Violence, District Attorneys Cyrus Vance, Jr. (Manhattan), Darcel D. Clark (Bronx), Eric Gonzalez (Brooklyn), Madeline Singas (Nassau), Richard A. Brown (Queens), Michael McMahon (Staten Island), and Timothy Sini (Suffolk) and Nassau Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder, the Mental Health Association of New York State, the Mental Health Association of New York City, the Mental Health Association in Orange County, Mental Health America of Dutchess County, the National Alliance on Mental Illness-New York State, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, the New York State Nurses Association, and the Greater New York Hospital Association.

About New Yorkers Against Gun Violence:

New Yorkers Against Gun Violence is a statewide organization working to reduce gun violence through advocacy and education designed to encourage action, influence public opinion and lead to policy change. With a primary focus on New York State, the organization also advocates at the local

and national levels for sensible gun laws, policies and practices that protect New York State residents from gun violence.

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