



2017 Legislative Priority: Health & Safety Agenda

Washington State Initiative 1491-Extreme Risk Protection Orders

OUR POSITION: **SUPPORT**

I-1491 is a 2016 Washington State Initiative (Extreme Risk Protection Orders) to the people which will allow **families and law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily suspend a person's access to firearms** if there is documented evidence that an individual is threatening harm to themselves or others. The person subject to that order must surrender their guns to police and will not be able to buy, sell, or possess other firearms for up to one year.

If you are a woman living in the United States, you are more likely to die from gun violence than any other developed nation in the world. Since the successful passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in February 2013, YWCA Olympia remains committed to addressing violence against women and girls through a renewed focus on domestic violence-related homicide reduction. The statistics are staggering; 46 women are shot to death every month by a current or former partner in domestic violence-related homicides. In fact, intimate partner homicides account for nearly half of all women killed each year in the U.S., and more than half of these deaths are attributed to firearm use. In Washington State, gun injuries and deaths are a significant public health problem with approximately 600 people killed by guns each year over the past decade, and in 2010 more people in Washington State died by guns (609) than traffic accidents (554).

Perpetrators with access to firearms are five to eight times more likely to kill their partners than those without firearms. While federal legislation mandates seizure of weapons upon the issuance of a protective order, most states do not adequately comply or follow up on attempts to seize weapons. Implementation of state laws that restrict access to firearms, increase police staffing to address intimate partner violence, and allow warrantless arrests for perpetrators in violation of issued protective orders have been proven to be effective in decreasing domestic violence-related homicides with a firearm by 19%, according to a 2010 UC Davis Violence Prevention Research Program study.

The vast majority of people who commit mass shootings and suicides show signs of their intentions. Family members are often the first to see those signs, but under our current laws families are powerless to remove firearms from individuals who show signs of dangerous and violent behavior. Extreme Risk Protection Orders will empower families to prevent tragedies by temporarily preventing people in crisis from accessing firearms. Families and law enforcement can ask a judge for an Extreme Risk Protection Order if there is demonstrated risk of violent behavior against oneself or others. The subject of an Extreme Risk Protection Order will be prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm for one year.

Presented to YWCA Advocacy Committee 08/08/16: Committee voted to approve support and send to Board of Directors

YWCA IS ON A MISSION