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Senator Lori Berman and Representative Kelly Skidmore to Refile Risk Protection Order Bill

BOCA RATON, Fla. - Following the horrific tragedies in Uvalde, TX and Buffalo, NY, **Senator Lori Berman (D-Delray Beach)** and **Representative Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton)** recommit to filing joint legislation strengthening Florida's Risk Protection Order (RPO) laws. **Senator Berman** filed a RPO bill in October 2017, preceding the Parkland shooting, and brought forth measures ranging from limiting firearms in child care facilities to prohibiting domestic abusers from owning a gun and much more in the realm of gun safety. In the aftermath of the latest school shooting, both legislators demand the Florida Legislature respond with action.

In 2018, as part of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Safety Act, the Legislature created a process for a law enforcement officer or law enforcement agency to petition a court for a risk protection order to temporarily prevent a person who is at high risk of harming themselves or others, including posing significant danger as a result of a mental health crisis or violent behavior, from accessing firearms. Since its establishment in 2018, 5,856 RPOs were filed in Florida. The proposed language expands the definition of 'petitioner' in statute to allow parents, grandparents, stepparents, legal guardians, spouses, and siblings to petition the court for a risk protection order.

"Year after year, House and Senate Democrats have fought tirelessly to ensure Floridians are safe from these horrific acts. One of the many ways in which we can work towards this is by temporarily removing firearms from the hands of those who may be a danger to themselves or others. This is just one of the many commonsense actions we can take now to make our communities safer. We have no choice but to act now. No more excuses," stated **Senator Berman**.

"There are no words left to say, no arguments left to make, no opining left to do, no thoughts and prayers left to offer. It is time to act," said **Representative Skidmore**. "This lifesaving tool has already been proven to be highly effective. Expanding its scope of use will empower people to take action when they see the early warning signs of potentially dangerous behavior."

“RPOs save lives and Moms Demand Action supports expanding who can petition for temporary removal of a person’s guns to include close family members who best recognize at-risk individuals without relying on law enforcement to first become involved. It comes down to this, if a family member sees a warning sign they can respond to it by asking for an RPO to save the life of the individual and others, and the proposed legislation makes this happen,” stated **Kelley Diveto, Legislative Lead**, Palm Beach County Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

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