Bills that would allow family members and/or law enforcement to temporarily disarm people in crisis gain traction.

In 2014, California enacted the groundbreaking Gun Violence Restraining Order law that allows family members and law enforcement officers to petition a court to temporarily remove guns from a dangerous person in crisis. Washington enacted a version of the GVRO, titled an Extreme Risk Protection Order, via a ballot initiative supported by an overwhelming majority of voters in 2016.

This year, legislators have introduced at least 18 bills modeled on California’s and Washington’s laws in at least 11 states. One of those bills in Illinois, HB 2354, passed a House committee on March 14.

A bill in California, SB 536, which would enable researchers to study the effectiveness of the GVRO law, is advancing. The bill would allow nonprofit educational institutions and the newly-created, state-funded Firearms Violence Research Center to access data about GVRO usage. A recent Duke University study demonstrated that a similar law in Connecticut was associated with a reduction in gun suicides. Research into the effectiveness of California’s GVRO, which is broader than Connecticut’s law, may provide important data to policymakers.

STATE ROUND-UP

ARIZONA: SB 1243 defeated
Would have allowed concealed carry in certain public establishments or at certain public events

CALIFORNIA: AB 785 advanced
Would prohibit people convicted of hate crime misdemeanors from possessing firearms

MARYLAND: HB 159/SB 946 passed first chambers
Would prohibit firearms on the property of a public institution of higher education

NORTH DAKOTA: HB 1402 to governor
Would authorize law enforcement to arrest the subject of a protective order who fails to surrender his or her firearms, and also take possession of the firearms

SOUTH DAKOTA: HB 1154 defeated
Would have allowed certain felons to be eligible for concealed carry permits

UTAH: HB 206 enacted
Prohibits people subject to domestic violence protective orders or convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors from possessing firearms

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Dangerous permitless and campus carry trends continue in 2017.

Prior to 2014, only four states allowed people to carry hidden, loaded guns in public without a permit (or a background check). Between 2014 and 2016, however, the gun lobby has added an additional six states to that list.

In February of this year, New Hampshire enacted permitless carry, and, on March 23, 2017, North Dakota followed suit when the governor signed HB 1169, bringing the total number of permitless carry states to 12.

Fortunately, however, a bill in South Dakota (HB 72) was defeated when the legislature failed to override the governor’s veto.

The gun lobby is also working diligently to bring guns onto college campuses. Since 2013, five states have opened their classroom doors to concealed firearms. Although campus carry failed in Georgia last year when Governor Deal vetoed the bill, a 2017 attempt—HB 280—has passed the House and the Senate judiciary committee. Thus far, in 2017, legislators in at least 16 additional states have introduced 36 campus carry bills.

A bill in Arkansas (HB 1249) that would allow people with permit enhancements to carry on campus is now on the governor’s desk.