

# Governor Carney Signs “Red Flag” Legislation

**HS 1 for HB 222 allows courts to issue a lethal violence protection order when citizens pose a danger to self or others**

**DOVER, Del.** – On Wednesday, Governor John Carney signed [House Substitute 1 for HB 222](#) into law surrounded by members of the General Assembly of both parties, law enforcement, and advocates for gun safety. This legislation, sponsored by Representative David Bentz, allows a court to issue a lethal violence protection order in cases where a family member or law enforcement officer can show that the respondent poses a danger to self or others by owning, possessing, controlling, purchasing or receiving a firearm.

*“This new legislation is another tool to help law enforcement and our community confront gun violence,” said **Governor John Carney**. “One piece of legislation alone will not solve the problem of gun violence, but with a comprehensive approach, along with efforts to strengthen security in our schools, we can make a difference. We’ve made great progress this legislative session and I would like to thank members of the General Assembly and advocates for their tireless work on this issue.”*

This bill is the latest in a package of gun safety measures Governor Carney has signed into law this legislative session, including the Beau Biden Gun Violence Prevention Act, toughening penalties around straw purchases, and banning “bump stocks” in the state.

*“Red flag bills are significant components of gun safety*

*reform, and I am so proud that Delaware has led in this effort this year with HS 1 for HB 222. We have taken a significant step forward to protect public safety and hopefully prevent some of these tragic instances of gun violence,” said **Representative David Bentz**. “While we may not be able to stop every horrific incident, a lethal violence protective order will reduce access to guns and empower citizens and law enforcement to intervene if a loved one presents a danger to themselves or others. Delaware has the opportunity to be model for the entire country with this legislation and it has been an honor to drive the initiative forward.”*

“This is an example of a gun bill that everyone should be able to support,” said **Senate Majority Leader Margaret Rose Henry**. “There is no clearer sign that somebody shouldn’t have a gun than a family member, or a member of law enforcement, saying they might hurt themselves or another. HB 222 will save lives without compromising due process. I applaud Rep. Bentz for the yeoman’s work he’s done building consensus around this common-sense reform.”

“I am very pleased to see this measure pass. This proposal accomplished two important goals: protecting the due process rights of Delawareans and providing people recourse whenever they feel immediately threatened and there is strong evidence that a person is a threat,” said **Senator Anthony Delcollo**. “This bill provides robust protections for civil rights while empowering law enforcement to act for the safety of our community. Thank you to Governor Carney and Representative Bentz for working with me to keep Delawareans safe and preserve these important constitutional protections.”

“This is the type of law that has been proven to save lives in other states,” said **Attorney General Matt Denn**. “It will save

lives here, too.”

“Keeping firearms out of dangerous hands is essential to our public safety,” said **Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long**. “Owning and using guns is a responsibility that must be taken seriously and with caution. When that responsibility is at risk, we have to do all we can to protect those individuals from harming their self or others. Thank you to Rep. Bentz and the members of the General Assembly for supporting this measure and making Delaware safer.”

*“In response to demands from Americans to stop gun violence, lawmakers in states across the country are finding the courage to pass bills that can save lives,” said **former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, co-founder of Giffords**. “If we’re serious about saving lives, we must continue to be serious about giving families and law enforcement officials the tools they need to prevent people at risk of harming themselves or others from accessing guns. Leaders in Delaware understand this and it’s why they’ve worked tirelessly with gun prevention advocates to sign this legislation into law. I applaud Governor Carney and the Delaware legislature for demonstrating the courage to show Congress and the rest of the country how we can take responsible steps to help keep guns out of the hands of people who are experiencing a crisis.”*

“The significance of the bipartisan support for HB 222 cannot be overstated,” said **Dennis Greenhouse, chair of the Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence Legislative Fund**. “This law passed through the entire General Assembly without a single vote against it, with co-sponsors from both sides of the aisle. That is a testament to how hard Rep. David Bentz worked in support of this bill, and he did work tirelessly to bring people together and to craft truly meaningful legislation. We cannot thank him enough. Lethal Violence Protection Orders will protect our family members, our friends and our neighbors

in their most vulnerable moments. In just the past few weeks, new research has shown that states that enact Red Flag laws see significant decreases in gun-related suicides. This is what we mean when we talk about common-sense gun violence legislation – and this law will save lives in Delaware.”

“This bill strengthens our current state law by creating a mechanism to temporarily prohibit individuals that pose an immediate threat of harm to themselves or others from possessing or purchasing firearms,” said **Robert Coupe, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security**. “Allowing law enforcement officers to request an emergency lethal violence protective order through the Justice of the Peace Court creates a process that can be quickly utilized in emergency situations thus increasing public safety.”

“Today is a momentous occasion. This Red Flag bill signing demonstrates that Delaware continues to lead the way across the country on common sense gun policies,” said Sarah Stowens, volunteer leader with the Delaware chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. “We could not be more proud of Governor Carney and lawmakers in the First State for making a serious commitment to gun safety and taking a critical step toward protecting our communities from gun violence.”

Learn more about Governor Carney’s call for comprehensive gun safety in Delaware.

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Click [here](#) for photos from the bill signing.