



Duckworth, Durbin Join Blumenthal, Colleagues to Introduce Legislation to Close Dangerous Loophole to Protect Domestic Abuse Survivors

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– As gun sales spike and reports of domestic violence increase across the country amid the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) joined U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and 18 of their colleagues in introducing bicameral legislation to protect domestic violence survivors from gun violence. The *Lori Jackson Domestic Violence Survivor Protection Act* would close dangerous loopholes in federal law that allow domestic abusers to legally obtain weapons.

“Domestic violence is all too common across this nation, and every survivor deserves to feel safe and protected,” Duckworth said. **“This means closing the senseless loopholes that allow abusers with temporary restraining orders to legally access firearms. We must do more to ensure the safety of survivors and support these necessary protections, and I’m proud to join Senator Blumenthal in helping introduce this vital legislation.”**

“Domestic abusers should not have access to firearms. Period,” said Durbin. **“We cannot permit federal law to continue allowing abusers under a temporary restraining order to still purchase or possess a gun, leaving survivors vulnerable to further harm. Congress must do its part to extend vital protections for survivors of domestic violence and keep guns out of the hands of known abusers.”**

This legislation would restrict those under temporary restraining order from purchasing or possessing a firearm, and would extend protections to domestic violence survivors who have been abused by their dating partners. Current federal law protects domestic

violence survivors from gun violence by preventing their abusers from purchasing or possessing a firearm – but only once the court has issued a permanent restraining order. This leaves survivors unprotected exactly when they are in the most danger: when a domestic abuser first learns his or her victim has left and only a temporary restraining order is in place.

Further, the current definition of “intimate partner” used to prohibit individuals convicted of domestic violence from purchasing or possessing a firearm includes spouses, former spouses, people with a child in common and cohabitants. However, there are many survivors of dating violence who were never married, do not live with their abuser, and have no children.

This bill’s provisions are a component of the *Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act*, landmark legislation designed to support and protect survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, which continues to stall in the Republican-controlled Senate.

This legislation is named in memory of Lori Jackson, an Oxford, Connecticut mother of two who was tragically shot and killed by her estranged husband, who had legally obtained a handgun even though he was subject to a temporary restraining order.

In addition to Duckworth, Durbin and Blumenthal, the Lori Jackson Domestic Violence Survivor Protection Act is co-sponsored by U.S. Senators Chris Murphy (D-CT), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Bob Casey (D-PA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and Bob Menendez (D-NJ).

The legislation is supported by a number of advocacy and support groups, including Everytown for Gun Safety, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Newtown Action Alliance, Brady, Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, and the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV).

The full text of the Senate legislation can be [found here](#) and the one pager can be [found here](#).