

CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION RE DRAFT LEGISLATION

Problem: We need a secure and economically feasible way of storing firearms of people who pose a threat to their family and are subject to a Relief From Abuse Order while also respecting the firearm owner's property rights.

- The majority of homicides in Vermont are related to domestic violence
- Federal law prohibits possession of a firearm while a Relief From Abuse Order is in effect
- Currently, firearms are sometimes given to a family member of the defendant because law enforcement lacks either the space or resources needed for storage
- Currently, there is no clear process for how to get guns back when a RFA Order expires

Solution: Legislation is needed to do two things:

- (1) Make clear that law enforcement (sheriffs) AND federally licensed firearm dealers can **charge a reasonable fee** for the storage of firearms that are surrendered pursuant to a court order, and **may sell the firearms where the defendant fails to pay the fees**
- (2) Make **law enforcement immune from claims for damages** as long as they use due care in the transfer and storage of firearms.

(Sheriff Clarke would like to explore seed money/revolving loan fund to help sheriffs build facilities.)

Stakeholders consulted so far: Sarah Kenney, Judy Rex, Carolyn Hanson from AGO, Sheriff Keith Clarke, Sheriff Bob Bohnyak (Orange), Sheriff Roger Marceau (Lamoille); Louis in touch with gun lobby

Next steps:

- Legislation is drafted based on models from other states, especially NH, MA, and NC
- Have met with victim groups and gun groups
- Sarah or Sarah and Keith to bring relevant sheriffs in to discuss
- Sarah and Keith to meet with legislators (Shap & Campbell, Sears, Lippert, Waite-Simpson)

Press event options: "ribbon cutting" at Sheriff Bohnyak's storage facility he is refurbishing in Orange County (this would not be until the fall), press event to announce legislation sooner