



## MARCH 2023 DIGEST

### A Golden Moment for Gun Law Reform in Colorado: The 2023 Legislature

Colorado will have at least five bills going through the legislative process this spring.

- Senate Bill 23-169: would increase the age to purchase firearms from 18 to 21.
- House Bill 23-1219: would increase the waiting period to deliver a firearm to three days after the initiation of the background check.
- Senate Bill 23-170: would strengthen the existing ERPO (Extreme Risk Protection Order) laws, and expand the list of who can file a petition to include licensed medical and mental health care providers, educators, and district attorneys.
- Senate Bill 23-168: would end liability protections for the gun industry and make it easier for victims of gun violence and their families to sue gun manufacturers and sellers.
- House Bill 23-1230: would ban assault weapons and prohibit a person from manufacturing, importing, purchasing, selling, offering to sell or transferring ownership of an assault weapon.

Read more about the beginning of the legislative session in this article from the Denver

Post: [Colorado is in a golden moment for gun law reform](#)

***Legislative Alert! Be ready to act! Look forward to information from the CFCU and Colorado Ceasefire joint Legislative Briefing. More information will be provided to reach out to your legislators.***

### First In-Person Lobby Day Event a Big Success

Over 50 advocates turned out for CFCU 's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Lobby Day with its valued partner Colorado Ceasefire at our first in-person meeting since COVID struck. Sen. Sullivan and Rep. Froelich provided the latest updates on at least 5 gun safety bills that will be introduced during what's been called the Golden Moment for gun reform.

CFCU members made the following presentations:

Opening Remarks – Alana Smart, B'nai Havurah

Profile of Gun Violence in Colorado - Susan Hahn, Epiphany Lutheran

Testifying at the Legislature - Julie Meyers, First Unitarian

Gun Violence Reform Proposals - Eileen McCarron, Park Hill UCC

(Also President of Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action)

Following the program, participants headed over to the Capitol to meet with legislators and their staff. Advocacy is not a spectator sport, so we hope you'll take the time to contact legislators when you receive our Legislative Alerts.

**Form a Rapid Response Network** so that your community can be quickly activated when we need to contact legislators. Use [How to Develop A Rapid Response Network in Your Congregation](#) for guidance in forming your RRN.

**CFCU's Public Health Strategies Action Team** will hold its first meeting of 2023 via ZOOM on Wednesday, March 15, from 11:00am – 12:30. Discussion topics include ERPO public education; 6<sup>th</sup> HIP (Handgun Intervention Program Cohort; Guns to Gardens events; mini-grants from Office of Gun Violence Prevention; and plans for the Colorado Public Health Summit on Gun Violence Prevention this June. Contact [alanaks@aol.com](mailto:alanaks@aol.com) for agenda/ZOOM link.

On February 25, CFCU Events team supported the effort of Peoples Presbyterian Church and Columbine United Church to dismantle 49 unwanted guns. 50 volunteers came from fourteen congregations. Mike Martin provided the expertise, the chop saws and the guidance. Pastor Steve Poos Benson, pastor of Columbine United, was the host and offered the opening prayer.

We closed the day with prayer offered by Presbyterian Pastor Fernando Rodriguez. Here are a few of the words from his prayer:

*"Help us as a nation to not only confess the sin of obsession with firearms and with the violence caused by their use, but also move forward with actions such as these today, advocacy and legislation that can be more reflective of your beloved community.*

*And as we do, may we continue to beat our modern-day swords and spears, into plowshares and pruning hooks, in such a way that bears witness to your abundant love and life."*

A video on CBS features Mike Martin and Pastor Steve Poos Benson is [here](#).

## **More Guns to Gardens Events**

- April 15, 10-12 at Most Precious Blood Parish, 3959 E. Iliff Ave. Denver
  - June 3, 11 - 1 at Smoky Hill United Methodist Church 19491 E Smoky Hill Rd. Centennial
- For more information go to [Guns to Gardens Metro Denver Website](#).

## **CFCU members participate in the 6th Cohort of HIP**

The Handgun Intervention Program (HIP), one of the probation programs provided by the Colorado Judicial Branch, gives young people with non-violent gun felonies a second chance. Each young person is matched with a group of adult volunteers who engage with him/her during a six week program. There are presentations and conversations, culminating in each young person giving a presentation about themselves, what they have learned, and what changes they plan to make in their lives. During this cohort, which culminated on March 6, six young people graduated. Seven CFCU members volunteered as mentors/partners.

Jonathan McMillan, Director of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, was the guest speaker for HIP graduation. He talked to the graduates about his own experience of incarceration as a young person. He encouraged them to make better decisions about who they were spending time with, telling them to find people who could Inspire, Encourage, Advise, Assist, and Hold Them Accountable. He also offered help such as providing tutors and job connections for them. The young people in this HIP cohort ranged in age from 8th through 12th grades.