

By Senator Berman

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to domestic violence; creating s.  
3       784.04875, F.S.; prohibiting certain acts of domestic  
4       violence and dating violence; providing criminal  
5       penalties; amending s. 790.065, F.S.; revising a  
6       prohibition on the sale or transfer of firearms to  
7       persons convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence  
8       offenses; amending s. 790.233, F.S.; defining the term  
9       "misdemeanor offense of domestic violence";  
10      prohibiting persons convicted of a misdemeanor offense  
11      of domestic violence from possessing a firearm or  
12      ammunition; requiring persons convicted of misdemeanor  
13      offenses of domestic violence, upon conviction, to  
14      surrender all firearms and ammunition in their  
15      possession; requiring a court, upon convicting a  
16      defendant of such offense, to order the defendant to  
17      surrender to the local law enforcement agency having  
18      jurisdiction all firearms and ammunition and any  
19      license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm;  
20      providing requirements for law enforcement officers  
21      carrying out the court order; requiring a law  
22      enforcement officer to take possession of all firearms  
23      and ammunition owned by the defendant and any license  
24      to carry a concealed weapon or firearm; authorizing a  
25      law enforcement officer to seek a search warrant under  
26      certain circumstances; requiring the law enforcement  
27      officer taking possession of the firearms, ammunition,  
28      and license to issue a receipt to the defendant and to  
29      file the original with the court and a copy with his

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30 or her law enforcement agency; requiring the court to  
31 make a certain determination upon a sworn statement or  
32 testimony that the defendant did not comply with the  
33 required surrender of any firearms, ammunition, or  
34 license; requiring the court to issue a warrant if it  
35 finds that probable cause exists; providing for the  
36 return of surrendered firearms, ammunition, and  
37 licenses to their lawful owner under certain  
38 circumstances; requiring all law enforcement agencies  
39 to develop certain policies and procedures;  
40 authorizing a defendant to elect to transfer all  
41 firearms and ammunition that he or she owns to another  
42 person if specified requirements are met; providing  
43 criminal penalties; creating s. 790.234, F.S.;  
44 defining the term "domestic violence"; requiring a law  
45 enforcement officer to remove firearms from the scene  
46 of an alleged act of domestic violence under certain  
47 circumstances; providing requirements for the law  
48 enforcement officer removing such firearms;  
49 authorizing the owner of the firearms to retake  
50 possession within a specified timeframe; providing an  
51 exception; providing an effective date.

52  
53 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

54  
55 Section 1. Section 784.04875, Florida Statutes, is created  
56 to read:

57 784.04875 Domestic violence.—A person who commits any act  
58 constituting domestic violence, as defined in s. 741.28, or any

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59 crime the underlying factual basis of which has been found by a  
60 court to include an act of domestic violence, knowing that the  
61 victim is in the class of persons covered by that statute, or  
62 dating violence, as defined in s. 784.046, knowing that the  
63 victim is in the class of persons covered by that statute,  
64 commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as  
65 provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

66 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section  
67 790.065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

68 790.065 Sale and delivery of firearms.—

69 (2) Upon receipt of a request for a criminal history record  
70 check, the Department of Law Enforcement shall, during the  
71 licensee's call or by return call, forthwith:

72 (a) Review any records available to determine if the  
73 potential buyer or transferee:

74 1. Has been convicted of a felony and is prohibited from  
75 receipt or possession of a firearm pursuant to s. 790.23;

76 2. Has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic  
77 violence, ~~and,~~ and, therefore, is prohibited from purchasing a  
78 firearm under 18 U.S.C. s. 922(d)(9) or s. 790.233;

79 3. Has had adjudication of guilt withheld or imposition of  
80 sentence suspended on any felony or misdemeanor crime of  
81 domestic violence, unless 3 years have elapsed since probation  
82 or any other conditions set by the court have been fulfilled or  
83 expunction has occurred; or

84 4. Has been adjudicated mentally defective or has been  
85 committed to a mental institution by a court or as provided in  
86 sub-sub-subparagraph b.(II), and as a result is prohibited by  
87 state or federal law from purchasing a firearm.

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88 a. As used in this subparagraph, "adjudicated mentally  
89 defective" means a determination by a court that a person, as a  
90 result of marked subnormal intelligence, or mental illness,  
91 incompetency, condition, or disease, is a danger to himself or  
92 herself or to others or lacks the mental capacity to contract or  
93 manage his or her own affairs. The phrase includes a judicial  
94 finding of incapacity under s. 744.331(6)(a), an acquittal by  
95 reason of insanity of a person charged with a criminal offense,  
96 and a judicial finding that a criminal defendant is not  
97 competent to stand trial.

98 b. As used in this subparagraph, "committed to a mental  
99 institution" means:

100 (I) Involuntary commitment, commitment for mental  
101 defectiveness or mental illness, and commitment for substance  
102 abuse. The phrase includes involuntary inpatient placement under  
103 ~~as defined in~~ s. 394.467, involuntary outpatient placement under  
104 ~~as defined in~~ s. 394.4655, involuntary assessment and  
105 stabilization under s. 397.6818, and involuntary substance abuse  
106 treatment under s. 397.6957, but does not include a person in a  
107 mental institution for observation or discharged from a mental  
108 institution based upon the initial review by the physician or a  
109 voluntary admission to a mental institution; or

110 (II) Notwithstanding sub-sub-subparagraph (I), voluntary  
111 admission to a mental institution for outpatient or inpatient  
112 treatment of a person who had an involuntary examination under  
113 s. 394.463 if, ~~where~~ each of the following conditions have been  
114 met:

115 (A) An examining physician found that the person is an  
116 imminent danger to himself or herself or others.

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117 (B) The examining physician certified that if the person  
118 did not agree to voluntary treatment, a petition for involuntary  
119 outpatient or inpatient treatment would have been filed under s.  
120 394.463(2)(g)4., or the examining physician certified that a  
121 petition was filed and the person subsequently agreed to  
122 voluntary treatment prior to a court hearing on the petition.

123 (C) Before agreeing to voluntary treatment, the person  
124 received written notice of that finding and certification, and  
125 written notice that as a result of such finding, he or she may  
126 be prohibited from purchasing a firearm, and may not be eligible  
127 to apply for or retain a concealed weapon or firearms license  
128 under s. 790.06 and the person acknowledged such notice in  
129 writing, in substantially the following form:

130 "I understand that the doctor who examined me believes I am  
131 a danger to myself or to others. I understand that if I do not  
132 agree to voluntary treatment, a petition will be filed in court  
133 to require me to receive involuntary treatment. I understand  
134 that if that petition is filed, I have the right to contest it.  
135 In the event a petition has been filed, I understand that I can  
136 subsequently agree to voluntary treatment prior to a court  
137 hearing. I understand that by agreeing to voluntary treatment in  
138 either of these situations, I may be prohibited from buying  
139 firearms and from applying for or retaining a concealed weapons  
140 or firearms license until I apply for and receive relief from  
141 that restriction under Florida law."

142 (D) A judge or a magistrate has, pursuant to sub-sub-  
143 subparagraph c.(II), reviewed the record of the finding,  
144 certification, notice, and written acknowledgment classifying  
145 the person as an imminent danger to himself or herself or

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146 others, and ordered that such record be submitted to the  
147 department.

148 c. In order to check for these conditions, the department  
149 shall compile and maintain an automated database of persons who  
150 are prohibited from purchasing a firearm based on court records  
151 of adjudications of mental defectiveness or commitments to  
152 mental institutions.

153 (I) Except as provided in sub-sub-subparagraph (II), clerks  
154 of court shall submit these records to the department within 1  
155 month after the rendition of the adjudication or commitment.  
156 Reports shall be submitted in an automated format. The reports  
157 must, at a minimum, include the name, along with any known alias  
158 or former name, the sex, and the date of birth of the subject.

159 (II) For persons committed to a mental institution pursuant  
160 to sub-sub-subparagraph b.(II), within 24 hours after the  
161 person's agreement to voluntary admission, a record of the  
162 finding, certification, notice, and written acknowledgment must  
163 be filed by the administrator of the receiving or treatment  
164 facility, as defined in s. 394.455, with the clerk of the court  
165 for the county in which the involuntary examination under s.  
166 394.463 occurred. No fee shall be charged for the filing under  
167 this sub-sub-subparagraph. The clerk must present the records to  
168 a judge or magistrate within 24 hours after receipt of the  
169 records. A judge or magistrate is required and has the lawful  
170 authority to review the records ex parte and, if the judge or  
171 magistrate determines that the record supports the classifying  
172 of the person as an imminent danger to himself or herself or  
173 others, to order that the record be submitted to the department.  
174 If a judge or magistrate orders the submittal of the record to

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175 the department, the record must be submitted to the department  
176 within 24 hours.

177 d. A person who has been adjudicated mentally defective or  
178 committed to a mental institution, as those terms are defined in  
179 this paragraph, may petition the court that made the  
180 adjudication or commitment, or the court that ordered that the  
181 record be submitted to the department pursuant to sub-sub-  
182 subparagraph c.(II), for relief from the firearm disabilities  
183 imposed by such adjudication or commitment. A copy of the  
184 petition shall be served on the state attorney for the county in  
185 which the person was adjudicated or committed. The state  
186 attorney may object to and present evidence relevant to the  
187 relief sought by the petition. The hearing on the petition may  
188 be open or closed as the petitioner may choose. The petitioner  
189 may present evidence and subpoena witnesses to appear at the  
190 hearing on the petition. The petitioner may confront and cross-  
191 examine witnesses called by the state attorney. A record of the  
192 hearing shall be made by a certified court reporter or by court-  
193 approved electronic means. The court shall make written findings  
194 of fact and conclusions of law on the issues before it and issue  
195 a final order. The court shall grant the relief requested in the  
196 petition if the court finds, based on the evidence presented  
197 with respect to the petitioner's reputation, the petitioner's  
198 mental health record and, if applicable, criminal history  
199 record, the circumstances surrounding the firearm disability,  
200 and any other evidence in the record, that the petitioner will  
201 not be likely to act in a manner that is dangerous to public  
202 safety and that granting the relief would not be contrary to the  
203 public interest. If the final order denies relief, the

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204 petitioner may not petition again for relief from firearm  
205 disabilities until 1 year after the date of the final order. The  
206 petitioner may seek judicial review of a final order denying  
207 relief in the district court of appeal having jurisdiction over  
208 the court that issued the order. The review shall be conducted  
209 de novo. Relief from a firearm disability granted under this  
210 sub-subparagraph has no effect on the loss of civil rights,  
211 including firearm rights, for any reason other than the  
212 particular adjudication of mental defectiveness or commitment to  
213 a mental institution from which relief is granted.

214 e. Upon receipt of proper notice of relief from firearm  
215 disabilities granted under sub-subparagraph d., the department  
216 shall delete any mental health record of the person granted  
217 relief from the automated database of persons who are prohibited  
218 from purchasing a firearm based on court records of  
219 adjudications of mental defectiveness or commitments to mental  
220 institutions.

221 f. The department is authorized to disclose data collected  
222 pursuant to this subparagraph to agencies of the Federal  
223 Government and other states for use exclusively in determining  
224 the lawfulness of a firearm sale or transfer. The department is  
225 also authorized to disclose this data to the Department of  
226 Agriculture and Consumer Services for purposes of determining  
227 eligibility for issuance of a concealed weapons or concealed  
228 firearms license and for determining whether a basis exists for  
229 revoking or suspending a previously issued license pursuant to  
230 s. 790.06(10). When a potential buyer or transferee appeals a  
231 nonapproval based on these records, the clerks of court and  
232 mental institutions shall, upon request by the department,



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233 provide information to help determine whether the potential  
234 buyer or transferee is the same person as the subject of the  
235 record. Photographs and any other data that could confirm or  
236 negate identity must be made available to the department for  
237 such purposes, notwithstanding any other provision of state law  
238 to the contrary. Any such information that is made confidential  
239 or exempt from disclosure by law shall retain such confidential  
240 or exempt status when transferred to the department.

241 Section 3. Section 790.233, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
242 read:

243 790.233 Possession of firearm or ammunition prohibited when  
244 person is subject to an injunction against committing acts of  
245 domestic violence, stalking, or cyberstalking; misdemeanor  
246 domestic violence offenses; surrender of firearms and  
247 ammunition; penalties.-

248 (2) As used in this section, the term "misdemeanor offense  
249 of domestic violence" means a misdemeanor conviction for a  
250 violation of s. 784.04875.

251 (3)~~(1)~~ A person may not have in his or her care, custody,  
252 possession, or control a ~~any~~ firearm or any ammunition if the  
253 person:

254 (a) Has been issued a final injunction that is currently in  
255 force and effect, ~~7~~ restraining that person from committing acts  
256 of domestic violence, as issued under s. 741.30, or from  
257 committing acts of stalking or cyberstalking, as issued under s.  
258 784.0485; or

259 (b) Has been convicted of a misdemeanor offense of domestic  
260 violence.

261 (4) A person convicted of a misdemeanor offense of domestic

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262 violence must, upon conviction, surrender all firearms and  
263 ammunition in his or her possession as provided in subsection  
264 (5).

265 (5) (a) Upon convicting a defendant of a misdemeanor offense  
266 of domestic violence under s. 784.04875, the court shall order  
267 the defendant to surrender to the local law enforcement agency  
268 having jurisdiction over the defendant all firearms and  
269 ammunition owned by the defendant which are in the defendant's  
270 custody, control, or possession, except as provided in  
271 subsection (6), and any license to carry a concealed weapon or  
272 firearm issued to the defendant under s. 790.06.

273 (b) The law enforcement officer carrying out the court  
274 order shall request that the defendant immediately surrender all  
275 firearms and ammunition owned by the defendant which are in his  
276 or her custody, control, or possession and any license to carry  
277 a concealed weapon or firearm issued under s. 790.06. The law  
278 enforcement officer shall take possession of all such  
279 surrendered firearms and ammunition and any such license.  
280 Alternatively, if personal service by a law enforcement officer  
281 is not possible or is not required because the defendant was  
282 present at the court hearing when the judge entered the order,  
283 the defendant must surrender in a safe manner any such firearms  
284 and ammunition and any such license to the control of the local  
285 law enforcement agency immediately after being served with the  
286 order by service or immediately after the hearing at which the  
287 defendant was present, as applicable. Notwithstanding ss. 933.02  
288 and 933.18, if a law enforcement officer has probable cause to  
289 believe that the defendant has not surrendered all firearms or  
290 ammunition owned by the defendant which are in his or her

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291 custody, control, or possession, the law enforcement officer may  
292 seek a search warrant from a court of competent jurisdiction to  
293 conduct a search for such firearms or ammunition.

294 (c) At the time of surrender, a law enforcement officer  
295 taking possession of any such firearm, ammunition, or license  
296 shall issue a receipt identifying all firearms surrendered, the  
297 quantity and type of any ammunition surrendered, and any license  
298 surrendered and shall provide a copy of the receipt to the  
299 defendant. Within 72 hours after service of the order, the law  
300 enforcement officer serving the order shall file the original  
301 receipt with the court and a copy of the receipt with his or her  
302 law enforcement agency.

303 (d) Notwithstanding ss. 933.02 and 933.18, upon the sworn  
304 statement or testimony of any person alleging that the defendant  
305 has failed to surrender any such firearms, ammunition, or  
306 license as required by an order issued under this subsection,  
307 the court shall determine whether probable cause exists to  
308 support the allegation of failure to surrender. If the court  
309 finds that probable cause exists that the defendant has failed  
310 to comply with the order, the court must issue a warrant  
311 describing the firearms, ammunition, or license that the  
312 defendant failed to surrender, authorizing a search of the  
313 locations where such firearms, ammunition, or license are  
314 reasonably believed to be located, and requiring the seizure of  
315 any such firearms, ammunition, or license discovered pursuant to  
316 the search.

317 (e) If a person other than the defendant claims title to  
318 any firearms or ammunition surrendered pursuant to this section  
319 and that person is determined by the law enforcement agency to

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320 be the lawful owner of the firearms or ammunition, the firearms  
321 or ammunition must be returned to that person if:

322 1. The lawful owner agrees to store the firearms or  
323 ammunition in a manner that prevents the defendant from having  
324 access to or control of the firearms or ammunition; and

325 2. The firearms or ammunition are not otherwise unlawfully  
326 possessed by the owner.

327 (f) All law enforcement agencies shall develop policies and  
328 procedures regarding the acceptance, storage, and return of  
329 firearms, ammunition, and licenses required to be surrendered  
330 under this section.

331 (6) A defendant may elect to transfer all firearms and  
332 ammunition that he or she owns which have been surrendered to or  
333 seized by a local law enforcement agency pursuant to subsection  
334 (5) to another person who is willing to receive the defendant's  
335 firearms and ammunition. The law enforcement agency must allow  
336 such a transfer only if it is determined that the designated  
337 recipient:

338 (a) Is eligible to own or possess a firearm and ammunition  
339 under federal and state law, after confirmation through a  
340 background check;

341 (b) Agrees to store the firearms and ammunition in a manner  
342 that prevents the defendant from having access to or control of  
343 the firearms and ammunition; and

344 (c) Agrees not to transfer the firearms or ammunition back  
345 to the defendant.

346 (7)-(2) A person who violates this section ~~subsection (1)~~  
347 commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as  
348 provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

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349        (1)~~(3)~~ It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
350 disabilities regarding possession of firearms and ammunition are  
351 consistent with federal law. Accordingly, this section does not  
352 apply to a state or local officer as defined in s. 943.10(14),  
353 holding an active certification, who receives or possesses a  
354 firearm or ammunition for use in performing official duties on  
355 behalf of the officer's employing agency, unless otherwise  
356 prohibited by the employing agency.

357        Section 4. Section 790.234, Florida Statutes, is created to  
358 read:

359        790.234 Domestic violence; temporary custody of firearms.-

360        (1) As used in this section, the term "domestic violence"  
361 means an act constituting domestic violence, as defined in s.  
362 741.28, and includes acts of domestic violence between dating  
363 partners as provided in s. 784.046(1)(d).

364        (2) When at the scene of an alleged act of domestic  
365 violence, a law enforcement officer must remove a firearm from  
366 the scene if:

367        (a) The law enforcement officer has probable cause to  
368 believe that an act of domestic violence has occurred; and

369        (b) The firearm is in plain view or is discovered during a  
370 consensual or other lawful search.

371        (3) If a firearm is removed from the scene under subsection  
372 (2), the law enforcement officer must:

373        (a) Provide to the owner a receipt identifying all firearms  
374 seized and information concerning the process for retaking  
375 possession of the firearm; and

376        (b) Provide for the safe storage of the firearm during the  
377 pendency of any proceeding related to the alleged act of

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378 domestic violence.

379 (4) Within 14 days after the conclusion of a proceeding on  
380 the alleged act of domestic violence or dating violence, the  
381 owner of the firearm may retake possession of the firearm unless  
382 ordered to surrender the firearm pursuant to s. 790.233.

383 Section 5. This act shall take effect October 1, 2021.