By Senator Polsky

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A bill to be entitled An act relating to weapons and firearms; providing a short title; creating s. 790.0653, F.S.; providing definitions; requiring a background check on every sale or other transfer of a firearm; requiring background checks on all persons involved in firearm sales or other transfers; providing an exemption; requiring that firearm sales or other transfers be conducted through, and processed by, a licensed dealer; authorizing a fee; providing exceptions; providing criminal penalties; requiring the investigating law enforcement agency to report certain violations to the Attorney General; providing applicability; amending s. 790.174, F.S.; revising requirements for the safe storage of firearms; providing and revising definitions; revising criminal penalties for violations; providing exceptions; amending s. 790.175, F.S.; requiring firearms sold by licensed dealers be provided with trigger locks or qun cases; revising the written warnings to be furnished to purchasers and posted in gun dealerships; requiring that certain materials be given to gun purchasers; providing exceptions; requiring a licensed dealer and a purchaser to sign a specified statement; providing record retention requirements for dealers; providing construction; providing criminal penalties; defining the term "licensed dealer"; creating s. 790.223, F.S.; providing definitions; prohibiting the manufacture, assembly, importing, purchasing, selling, or

transferring of any firearm not imprinted with a valid serial number; prohibiting specified acts involving unfinished firearm frames or receivers; prohibiting certain actions leading to the assembly of a firearm; prohibiting certain activities involving a threedimensional printer or computer numerical control milling machine that has the primary or intended function of manufacturing or assembling firearms or related items; providing criminal penalties; providing applicability; providing exceptions; providing construction; creating the Veteran's Firearm Suicide Reduction Task Force; providing requirements for the task force; providing membership; providing for staff support; providing requirements for meetings; specifying duties and powers of the task force; authorizing the task force to seek assistance from state agencies; requiring the task force to submit a report; providing for repeal of the task force; providing effective dates.

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

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Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Responsible Gun Ownership Act."

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Section 2. Section 790.0653, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

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790.0653 Transfers of firearms; transfer through licensed dealer required.—

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(1) As used in this section, the term:

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(a) "Background check" means the process described in 18
U.S.C. s. 922(t) and s. 790.065 of using the National Instant
Criminal Background Check System and other systems to determine
that a person is not prohibited from possessing or receiving a
firearm under federal or state law.

- (b) "Family member" means a spouse, whether by consanguinity, adoption, or step-relation, or any of the following relations:
 - 1. Parent;
 - 2. Child;

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- 3. Sibling;
- 4. Grandparent; or
- 5. Grandchild.
- (c) "Firearm" has the same meaning as in s. 790.001 and includes any handgun, rifle, or shotgun or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver.
- (d) "Licensed dealer" means a person who holds a federal firearms license issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. s. 923(a).
- (e) "Person" means any individual, corporation, trust, company, firm, partnership, association, club, organization, society, joint stock company, or other legal entity.
- (f) "Purchaser or other transferee" means an unlicensed person who wishes or intends to receive a firearm from another unlicensed person.
- (g) "Sale" means the sale, delivery, or passing of ownership or control of a firearm for a fee or other consideration.
- (h) "Seller or other transferor" means an unlicensed person who wishes or intends to transfer a firearm to another

unlicensed person.

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(i) "Transfer" means to furnish, give, lend, deliver, or otherwise provide, with or without consideration.

- (j) "Unfinished frame or receiver" means a forging,
 casting, printing, extrusion, machined body, or similar item
 that is:
- 1. Designed to or may readily be completed, assembled, or otherwise converted to function as a frame or receiver; or
- 2. Marketed or sold to the public to become or be used as the frame or receiver of a functional firearm, rifle, or shotgun once completed, assembled, or otherwise converted.

However, the term does not include a component designed and intended for use in an antique weapon.

- (k) "Unlicensed person" means a person who is not a licensed dealer.
- (2) All persons involved in firearm sales or other transfers, in whole or in part, are subject to background checks unless specifically exempted by state or federal law. If the person involved in the firearm sale or other transfer, in whole or in part, is a corporation or any entity other than an individual person, the principal individual or individuals involved in such sale or other transfer on behalf of the corporation or other entity are subject to background checks unless specifically exempted by federal law. A person may not sell or otherwise transfer a firearm unless:
 - (a) The person is a licensed dealer;
- 115 (b) The purchaser or other transferee is a licensed dealer;

116 <u>or</u>

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- (c) The requirements of subsection (3) are met.
- (3) If neither party to a prospective firearm sale or other transfer is a licensed dealer, the parties to the transaction shall complete the sale or other transfer through a licensed dealer as follows:
- (a) The seller or other transferor and the purchaser or other transferee shall appear jointly with the firearm at a licensed dealer and request that the licensed dealer conduct a background check on the purchaser or other transferee.
- (b) A licensed dealer who agrees to facilitate a background check under this section shall process the sale or other transfer as if he or she were transferring the firearm from the licensed dealer's own inventory to the purchaser or other transferee, complying with all requirements of federal and state law that would apply if he or she were the seller or other transferor of the firearm, including all background checks and recordkeeping requirements.
- (c) The seller or other transferor and the purchaser or other transferee shall each complete, sign, and submit all state and federal forms necessary to process the background check and otherwise complete the sale or other transfer pursuant to this section, and the licensed dealer shall indicate on the forms that the sale or other transfer is between unlicensed persons.
- (d) This section does not prevent the seller or other transferor from removing the firearm from the premises of the licensed dealer while the background check is being conducted or during the applicable waiting period, provided that the seller or other transferor returns to the business premises of the licensed dealer and delivers the firearm to the licensed dealer

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before completion of the sale or other transfer.

- (e) A licensed dealer or a seller or other transferor may not sell or otherwise transfer a firearm to a purchaser or other transferee if the results of the background check indicate that the purchaser or other transferee is prohibited from possessing or receiving a firearm under federal or state law.
- (f) A licensed dealer who agrees to conduct a background check may charge a reasonable fee not to exceed the administrative costs incurred by the licensed dealer for facilitating the sale or other transfer of the firearm, plus applicable fees pursuant to federal and state law.
 - (4) Subsections (2) and (3) do not apply to the following:
- (a) A law enforcement officer, as defined in s. 943.10(1), or corrections agency, or a law enforcement officer or correctional officer, as defined in s. 943.10(1) and (2), respectively, vested with the authority to bear arms, acting within the course and scope of his or her employment or official duties.
- (b) A United States Marshals Service officer, United States

 Armed Forces or National Guard member, or federal official

 vested with the authority to bear arms, acting within the course and scope of his or her employment or official duties.
- (c) A gunsmith who receives a firearm solely for the purposes of service or repair who returns the firearm to its lawful owner.
- (d) A common carrier, warehouseman, or other person engaged in the business of transportation or storage, to the extent that the receipt of any firearm is in the ordinary course of business and not for the personal use of any such person.

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(e) A person who is not prohibited from possessing or receiving a firearm under state or federal law who has temporarily transferred a firearm:

- 1. Solely for the purpose of shooting at targets, if the transfer occurs on the premises of a sport shooting range authorized by the governing body of the jurisdiction in which the range is located, or, if no such authorization is required, operated consistently with local law in such jurisdiction, and the firearm is at all times kept within the premises of the sport shooting range;
- 2. While the person is accompanying the lawful owner of the firearm and using the firearm for lawful hunting purposes, if hunting is legal in all places where the person possesses the firearm and the person holds all licenses and permits required for such hunting;
- 3. While participating in a lawfully organized competition involving the use of a firearm; or
 - 4. While in the presence of the seller or other transferor.
- (f) A family member of the seller or other transferor. This paragraph does not apply if the lawful owner or family member knows or has reasonable cause to believe that federal or state law prohibits the family member from purchasing or possessing a firearm, or the seller or other transferor knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the family member is likely to use the firearm for unlawful purposes.
- (g) An executor, administrator, trustee, or personal representative of an estate or trust that occurs by operation of law upon the death of the former lawful owner of the firearm.
 - (h) The temporary transfer of a firearm if such transfer is

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to prevent immediate or imminent death or great bodily harm to one's self or others, provided that the person to whom the firearm is transferred is not prohibited from possessing a firearm under state or federal law and the temporary transfer lasts no longer than necessary to prevent such immediate or imminent death or great bodily harm.

- (i) The sale or other transfer of an antique firearm.
- (5) A person who violates this section commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.
- (6) In addition to any other penalty or remedy, the investigating law enforcement agency shall report any violation of this section committed by a licensed dealer to the Attorney General.
- (7) This section does not apply to any firearm modified to render it permanently inoperable.
- Section 3. Section 790.174, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 - 790.174 Safe storage of firearms required.—
- (1) (a) A person who stores or leaves, on a premise under his or her control, a loaded firearm, as defined in s. 790.001, and who knows or reasonably should know that a minor is likely to gain access to the firearm without the lawful permission of the minor's parent or the person having charge of the minor, or without the supervision required by law, shall keep the firearm in a securely locked box or container or in a location which a reasonable person would believe to be secure or shall secure it with a trigger lock, except when the person is carrying the firearm on his or her body or within such close proximity

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thereto that he or she can retrieve and use it as easily and quickly as if he or she carried it on his or her body.

- (b) A person who stores or leaves, on a premise under his or her control, a firearm as defined in s. 790.001, and who knows or reasonably should know that a prohibited user is likely to gain access to the firearm, shall keep the firearm in a securely locked box or container or shall secure it with a trigger lock, except when the person is carrying the firearm on his or her body or within such close proximity thereto that he or she can retrieve and use the firearm as easily and quickly as if he or she carried it on his or her body. For the purposes of this section, the term "prohibited user" means any person who is prohibited by state or federal law from possessing the firearm.
- (2) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) It is a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, if a person violates subsection (1):
- (a) It is a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
- (b) If, as a result of the violation, by failing to store or leave a firearm in the required manner And as a result thereof a prohibited user or a minor gains access to the firearm, without the lawful permission of the minor's parent or the person having charge of the minor, and possesses or exhibits it, without the supervision required by law:
 - $\frac{1.}{(a)}$ In a public place; or
- 2.(b) In a rude, careless, angry, or threatening manner in violation of s. 790.10.

A person who violates subsection (1) commits a misdemeanor of

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the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

- (c) The penalties provided in this section do not apply if the prohibited user or the minor obtains the firearm: This subsection does not apply
- $\underline{1.}$ If the minor obtains the firearm As a result of an unlawful entry by any person.
- 2. While lawfully acting in self-defense or defense of another.
- 3. With the permission of the minor's parent or guardian and the minor uses or possesses the firearm during the minor's employment; ranching or farming; or target practice, hunting, or instruction in the safe use of a firearm.
 - (3) As used in this section act, the term:
- (a) "Locked box or container" means a secure container that is fully enclosed and locked by a padlock, key lock, combination lock, or similar locking device.
- (b) "Locking device" means a trigger lock, cable lock, or similar lock that prevents an unloaded firearm from discharging when the locking device is properly engaged, so as to render such weapon inoperable by any person other than the owner or other lawfully authorized user.
- (c) "Minor" means any person under the age of 18 16.
 Section 4. Section 790.175, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 790.175 Transfer or sale of firearms; required warnings; penalties.—
- (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a licensed dealer may not sell a firearm in this state unless the sale includes

one of the following:

- (a) A commercially available trigger lock or other device designed to disable the firearm and prevent the discharge of the firearm.
- (b) A commercially available gun case or storage container that can be secured to prevent unauthorized access to the firearm.
- $\underline{(2)}$ (1) Upon the retail commercial sale or retail transfer of any firearm, the <u>licensed dealer</u> seller or transferor shall deliver:
- (a) A written warning to the purchaser or transferee, which warning states, in block letters not less than 1/4 inch in height:
- "IT IS UNLAWFUL, AND PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT AND FINE, FOR ANY ADULT TO STORE OR LEAVE A FIREARM IN ANY PLACE WITHIN THE REACH OR EASY ACCESS OF A MINOR UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE OR TO KNOWINGLY SELL OR OTHERWISE TRANSFER OWNERSHIP OR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM TO A MINOR OR A PERSON OF UNSOUND MIND. YOU MAY BE CRIMINALLY AND CIVILLY LIABLE FOR ANY HARM CAUSED BY A MINOR WHO LAWFULLY GAINS UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO YOUR FIREARM IF UNLAWFULLY STORED."
- (b) A brochure or pamphlet that includes safety information on the use and storage of the firearm in a home environment.
- (c) A written warning informing the purchaser of the penalties for failing to store or leave a firearm in the manner required under s. 790.174.
- (3)(2) Any <u>licensed dealer</u> retail or wholesale store, shop, or sales outlet which sells firearms must conspicuously post at each purchase counter the following warning in block letters not

less than 1 inch in height:

"IT IS UNLAWFUL TO STORE OR LEAVE A FIREARM IN ANY
PLACE WITHIN THE REACH OR EASY ACCESS OF A MINOR UNDER
18 YEARS OF AGE OR TO KNOWINGLY SELL OR OTHERWISE
TRANSFER OWNERSHIP OR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM TO A
MINOR OR A PERSON OF UNSOUND MIND."

- (4) This section does not apply to any of the following:
- (a) The sale of a firearm to a law enforcement officer as defined in s. 943.10(1) or an employing agency as defined in s. 943.10(4).
- (b) The sale of a firearm to a person who presents to the licensed dealer one of the following:
- 1. A trigger lock or other device designed to disable the firearm and prevent the discharge of the firearm together with a copy of the purchase receipt for the licensed dealer to keep. A separate trigger lock or device and a separate purchase receipt are required for each firearm purchased.
- 2. A gun case or storage container that can be secured to prevent unauthorized access to the firearm together with a copy of the purchase receipt for the licensed dealer to keep. A separate gun case or storage container and a separate purchase receipt are required for each firearm purchased.
 - (c) The sale of an antique firearm.
- (5) Upon the sale of a firearm, a licensed dealer shall sign a statement and require the purchaser to sign a statement that the sale is in compliance with subsections (1), (3), and (4). The dealer shall retain a copy of the signed statements and, if applicable, a copy of the receipt prescribed in paragraph (4)(b), for at least 6 years.

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(6) (a) This section does not create a civil action or liability for damages arising from the use or misuse of a firearm or ammunition for a person, other than a licensed dealer, who produces a firearm or ammunition.

- (b) A licensed dealer is not liable for damages arising from the use or misuse of a firearm if the sale complies with this section, any other applicable law of this state, and applicable federal law.
- (7)(3) Any person or business knowingly violating a requirement to provide warning under this section commits:
- (a) For a first violation, a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
- (b) For a second violation, a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
- (c) For a third or subsequent violation, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.
- (8) As used in this section, the term "licensed dealer" means a person who holds a license as a dealer in firearms issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. s. 923(a).
- Section 5. Section 790.223, Florida Statutes, is created to read:
 - 790.223 Unfinished firearms.—
 - (1) As used in this section, the term:
- (a) "Federal licensee authorized to serialize firearms" means a person, firm, corporation, or other entity that holds any valid federal license that authorizes the person, firm, corporation, or other entity to imprint serial numbers onto firearms and completed or unfinished frames or receivers

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pursuant to chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.

- (b) "Federally licensed gunsmith, manufacturer, or importer" means a person, firm, corporation, or other entity that holds a valid gunsmith license, or license to manufacture or import firearms issued pursuant to chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
- (c) "Firearms importer or manufacturer" means a person licensed to import or manufacture firearms pursuant to 18 U.S.C. chapter 44.
- (d) "Frame" has the meaning attributed to it in chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
- (e) "Law enforcement agency" has the same meaning as in s. 23.1225(1)(d).
- (f) "License to manufacture firearms" means a valid license to manufacture firearms issued pursuant to chapter 44 of Title

 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
- (g) "Manufacture or assemble" means to fabricate, construct, make, fit together component parts of, or otherwise produce, a firearm or completed or unfinished frame or receiver, including through additive, subtractive, or other processes to form, produce, or construct by manual labor or machinery.
- (h) "Receiver" has the meaning attributed to it in chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
 - (i) "Security exemplar" has the meaning attributed to it in

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chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss.
921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.

- (j) "Undetectable firearm" means a firearm manufactured, assembled, or otherwise consisting entirely of nonmetal substances, if one of the following is true:
- 1. After the removal of grips, stocks, and magazines, the firearm is not detectable as a security exemplar by a walk-through metal detector calibrated to detect the security exemplar; or
- 2. The firearm includes a major component that, if subjected to inspection by the type of X-ray machines commonly used at airports, would not generate an image that accurately depicts the shape of the component.

As used in this paragraph, the term "major component" has the meaning attributed to it in 18 U.S.C. s. 922.

- (k) "Unfinished frame or receiver" has the same meaning as provided in s. 790.0653(1)(j).
- (1) "Valid serial number" means a serial number that has been imprinted by a federal licensee authorized to serialize firearms in accordance with federal law, or that has otherwise been assigned to a firearm or completed or unfinished frame or receiver pursuant to the laws of any state or pursuant to chapter 53 of Title 26 of the United States Code, 26 U.S.C. ss. 5801 et seq., and the regulations issued pursuant thereto.
- (2) It is unlawful to knowingly manufacture or assemble, cause to be manufactured or assembled, import, purchase, sell, offer for sale, or transfer ownership of any firearm that is not imprinted with a valid serial number.

(3) It is unlawful to knowingly import, purchase, sell, offer for sale, or transfer ownership of any completed or unfinished frame or receiver, unless the completed or unfinished frame or receiver:

- (a) Is deemed to be a firearm pursuant to chapter 44 of Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. ss. 921 et seq., and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
 - (b) Is imprinted with a valid serial number.
- (4) Beginning January 1, 2026, it is unlawful to knowingly possess a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver that is not imprinted with a valid serial number.
- (5) A person may not knowingly manufacture or assemble or cause to be manufactured or assembled, import, sell, offer for sale, transfer, or possess any undetectable firearm.
- (6) It is unlawful to use a three-dimensional printer or computer numerical control (CNC) milling machine to manufacture or assemble any firearm or completed or unfinished frame or receiver within this state without a valid license to manufacture firearms.
- (7) It is unlawful to sell, offer to sell, transfer, purchase, or receive a three-dimensional printer or CNC milling machine that has the primary or intended function of manufacturing or assembling firearms or completed or unfinished frames or receivers if the recipient does not have a valid license to manufacture firearms.

There is a presumption that a three-dimensional printer or CNC milling machine has the primary or intended function of manufacturing or assembling firearms or completed or unfinished

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frame or receivers if the printer or machine is marketed or sold in a manner that advertises that it may be used to manufacture or assemble firearms or completed or unfinished frames or receivers, or in a manner that foreseeably promotes the printer or machine's use in manufacturing or assembling such weapons, regardless of whether the printer or machine is otherwise described or classified as having other functions or as a general-purpose printer or machine.

- (8) Except by operation of law, it is unlawful for a person who does not have a valid license to manufacture or assemble firearms to sell or transfer ownership of a firearm if:
- (a) The person manufactured or assembled the firearm without a valid license to manufacture firearms;
- (b) The person knowingly caused the firearm to be manufactured or assembled by another person who does not have a valid license to manufacture firearms; or
- (c) The person is aware that the firearm was manufactured or assembled by another person who does not have a valid license to manufacture firearms.
 - (9) A person who violates this section commits:
- (a) For the first offense, a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
- (b) For a second or subsequent offense, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.
 - (10) This section does not apply to any of the following:
- (a) A firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver that is an antique firearm, as defined in 27 C.F.R. s. 479.11, or that has been rendered permanently inoperable.

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(b) The sale, offer for sale, or transfer of ownership of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver, to a law enforcement agency.

- (c) The manufacture or assembly, importation, purchase, transfer, or possession of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver by a law enforcement agency for law enforcement purposes.
- (d) The sale or transfer of ownership of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver to a federally licensed gunsmith, manufacturer, or importer, or to any other federal licensee authorized to serialize firearms.
- (e) The manufacture or assembly, importation, purchase, or possession of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver by a federally licensed gunsmith, manufacturer, or importer, or by any other federal licensee authorized to serialize firearms.
- (f) A member of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard while on duty and acting within the scope and course of employment, or any law enforcement agency or forensic laboratory.
- (g) A common carrier, motor carrier, air carrier, or carrier affiliated with an air carrier through common controlling interest that is subject to Title 49 of the United States Code, or an authorized agent of any such carrier, when acting in the course and scope of duties incident to the receipt, processing, transportation, or delivery of property.
- (h) An authorized representative of local, state, or federal government that receives a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver as part of an authorized, voluntary

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buyback program in which the governmental entity is buying or receiving such weapons from private individuals.

- (i) The possession and disposition of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver by a person who meets all of the following:
- $\underline{\mbox{1. The person is not prohibited by state or federal law}}$ from possessing the weapon.
- 2. The person possessed the firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver no longer than was necessary to deliver it to a law enforcement agency for that agency's disposition according to law.
- 3. If the person is transporting the firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver, the person is transporting it to a law enforcement agency in order to deliver it to the agency for the agency's disposition according to law.
- (j) The possession or importation of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver by a nonresident of the state who:
- 1. Is traveling with the firearm or completed or unfinished frame or receiver in the state in accordance with 18 U.S.C. s. 926A; or
- 2. Possesses or imports the firearm or completed or unfinished frame or receiver in the state exclusively for use in an organized sport shooting event or competition, and no longer than reasonably necessary to participate in such an event or competition.
- (k) The possession or importation of a firearm or any completed or unfinished frame or receiver by a new resident moving into the state who, within 90 days after moving into the

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552 state, causes the firearm or completed or unfinished frame or
553 receiver to be imprinted with a valid serial number, removes the
554 weapon from the state, or otherwise comes into compliance with
555 this section.

Section 6. This act does not prohibit the sale of an unfinished frame or receiver or firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number to a firearms importer or manufacturer or a licensed dealer before January 1, 2026. As used in this section, the term "licensed dealer" means a person licensed as a dealer in firearms issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. s. 923(a).

Section 7. Effective July 1, 2025, the Veteran's Firearm Suicide Reduction Task Force is created.

- (1) The Veteran's Firearm Suicide Reduction Task Force, a task force as defined in s. 20.03, is created within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the task force shall comply with the requirements of s. 20.052.
- (2) (a) The 10-member task force shall convene no later than September 1, 2025, and must be composed of two members appointed by each of the following: the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. Appointments must be made by August 1, 2025. The Governor shall appoint a chair from among the members.

 Members serve at the pleasure of the appointing officer. A vacancy on the task force must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.
- (b) The general counsel of the Department of Veterans'

 Affairs shall serve as the general counsel for the task force.

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(c) The chair shall assign staff from the Department of Veterans' Affairs to assist the task force in performing its duties.

- (d) The task force shall meet at the call of the chair, as necessary to conduct its work, at a time and location in this state designated by the chair. The task force may conduct its meetings through teleconferences or other similar means.
- (3) The task force shall investigate the causes of suicide by veterans, focusing on suicides involving firearms. In addition, the task force shall report on strategies and initiatives to reduce the rate of suicide among veterans with a focus on firearm suicides.
- (4) The task force may call upon appropriate state agencies for such professional assistance as may be needed in the discharge of its duties, and such agencies shall provide such assistance in a timely manner.
- (5) The task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2026.
- (6) This section is repealed upon submission of the task force report.

Section 8. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and this section, which shall take effect July 1, 2025, this act shall take effect October 1, 2025.