

# Evers campaign: “Opinion I Michels’ demeans violence survivors with comments on red flag laws”

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*“Michels’ opposition to commonsense gun safety laws and his casual derision of domestic violence survivors is not just out of touch with Wisconsinites, it is downright irresponsible and dangerous.”*

MADISON, Wis. — In case you missed it, [Wisconsinites are speaking out](#) about Tim Michels’ radical agenda on gun safety and his extremely concerning rhetoric towards domestic violence survivors.

Michels has refused to support “red flag” laws that are backed by 81% of Wisconsin voters and are often used as a response tool to protect victims of domestic violence from their abusers. Michels [said](#) that abusers shouldn’t have their weapons confiscated because an “angry ex, ex spouse makes a complaint. ‘Oh, he made a threat to me’ and then the police have to go confiscate his guns.”

Not only is Michels’ position radical, but he also clearly doesn’t understand how red flag laws work. Extreme risk protection orders [follow due process](#) — they allow law enforcement officers to petition courts to temporarily remove weapons from someone who may harm themselves or others.

Michels is out of touch with the majority of Wisconsinites who support common-sense gun safety — he opposes a bipartisan package of common sense gun safety reforms that included background checks for those under 21 purchasing guns and made it harder for deadly weapons to fall into the hands of domestic abusers. Michels also believes 18 year olds should be able to buy AR-15s with no waiting period.

Tim Michels is wrong for Wisconsin and wrong for the safety of our communities. Gov. Evers will always support common-sense gun safety and do the right thing for Wisconsin.

Read more below.

### **The Cap Times: [Opinion | Michels' demeans violence survivors with comments on red flag laws](#)**

In a televised Republican gubernatorial town hall at the beginning of August, and again during this month's gubernatorial debate, Tim Michels expressed opposition to commonsense gun safety measures that can be used to protect victims of domestic violence, saying abusers should not have their weapons removed just because an "angry ex, ex-spouse makes a complaint."

Not only do Michels' comments incorrectly represent the purpose of extreme risk protective order laws, which help prevent gun violence across the country by allowing officials to act on early warning signs by removing firearms from people at risk of harming themselves or others, but he also belittles the experiences of domestic violence survivors by reducing them to nothing more than someone angry at an ex.

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, it is worth reminding voters that domestic violence is neither a rare nor an isolated phenomenon. One in three women and one in four men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner, with domestic violence affecting more than 10 million Americans every year. Domestic violence occurs across age, race, gender, geography and financial means and can take many forms, including physical and psychological assaults.

In Wisconsin alone, 36.3% of women and 32.1% of men have experienced domestic violence in their lifetimes.

For these victims, an abuser's access to firearms can mean the difference between life and death. Every month, an average of 70 women are shot and killed during a domestic assault, and domestic violence incidents involving guns are 12 times more likely to result in death than incidents involving other or no weapons. Here in Wisconsin, firearms are the most common means of perpetrating domestic violence homicides, reflecting 67% of domestic violence deaths in our state last year.

Extreme risk protective orders are a tool used by courts to prevent deadly domestic violence, mass shootings and gun suicides. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have “red flag” laws in place that allow loved ones or police to petition a judge to remove firearms from individuals making credible threats of gun violence — and the laws work.

Michels’ vehement opposition to this type of life-saving law ignores the 81% of Wisconsin voters supporting this commonsense gun safety measure. And Michels’ flippant treatment of a dangerous reality that millions of people have experienced is not only disrespectful, it puts lives at risk.

It is wrong to trivialize the patterns of abuse and trauma experienced in intimate partner violence as just an “angry ex” complaining about their partner, and it is wrong for Michels to have disrespected domestic violence survivors to score a political point.

Michels’ opposition to commonsense gun safety laws and his casual derision of domestic violence survivors is not just out of touch with Wisconsinites, it is downright irresponsible and dangerous. Extreme risk protective orders are an effective tool that can save lives from gun violence, and Tim Michels’ refusal to acknowledge that simple fact confirms that he is not fit to serve Wisconsin’s families.