

U.S. Rep. Fitzgerald's: Law-Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act passes House

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WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Scott Fitzgerald (WI-05) issued the following statement after his bill, the *Law-Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act*, passed the House of Representatives 233-185.

*“Less-than-lethal weapons give law enforcement critical options to de-escalate dangerous situations safely and protect lives,” **said Congressman Scott Fitzgerald.** “The Law-Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act ensures outdated federal definitions don’t stand in the way of officers accessing the equipment they need to keep themselves and the public safe. I’m grateful to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their strong bipartisan support in advancing this commonsense update to the law.”*

BACKGROUND: This legislation modernizes the Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) by excluding “less-than-lethal projectile devices” from its definition of the term “firearm.” Under the current reading of the GCA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) considers new models of less-than-lethal equipment, such as TASER devices, to be classified as firearms due to the way an object is propelled, although they do not carry a substantial risk of serious injury or death. The current classification has made procurement of these devices, critical for self-defense and de-escalation, difficult for law enforcement. This also leads to the misclassification of police officers’ use of force, as the use of any firearm is considered “deadly force” by a majority of states.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS: Major County Sheriffs Association (MCSA), Major City Chiefs Association (MCCA), National Sheriffs’ Association, and International

Union of Police Associations (IUPA).