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Tracking device law proposed for violators of restraining orders

Legislation is introduced in Springfield after woman was killed by ex-boyfriend

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Anyone who violates an order of protection could be forced to wear a satellite tracking device that would issue an electronic warning if the offender gets too close to the victim, under legislation introduced Tuesday in Springfield.

The proposed law was prompted by last month's slaying of Elmhurst real estate broker Cindy Bischof, 43, who was gunned down outside her office by her ex-boyfriend, who then turned the gun on himself. Michael Giroux violated Bischof's order of protection at least twice.

The legislation is modeled after a similar law in [Massachusetts](#), which last year gave authorities the option of using tracking by global positioning systems (GPS) for those under protection orders. The device alerts the victim and police if the harasser approaches such restricted safe zones as a home or workplace.

"What we need in this situation is to be able to identify those who have the propensity for violating conditions of bond, and for violations of orders, and a way to make this more than just a piece of paper," said state Rep. Dennis Reboletti (R-Elmhurst), one of the measure's chief sponsors.

The bill would mandate counseling for the subjects of restraining orders, although the type of treatment would be left up to the judge entering the order.

House Republicans who proposed the measure wanted to give anyone who needs a protection order "an added level of protection" if the order is violated, Reboletti said.

Democratic legislative leaders sounded pessimistic this week about the legislation's chances this spring, especially because the deadline for new legislation to emerge from committee in the spring session was March 14.

However, Illinois Atty. Gen. [Lisa Madigan](#) is supporting GPS tracking, said her spokeswoman, Cara Smith.

"It's a wonderful idea, and this technology will provide another level of supervision and hopefully give survivors some peace of mind, give law enforcement more tools to track abusers who have demonstrated that they will not comply with the law," she said. Even if the legislation gets bogged down in the factional squabbles that have come to define Springfield, the Cook County state's attorney's office is exploring ways GPS tracking might be offered as a way to guard harassment victims in the county without changing the law, said John Gorman, a spokesman for the office.

"We're considering several options, including possibly doing it without legislation," he said.

The county's Adult Probation Department could offer GPS for those under its supervision without legislation, Gorman said.

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