REFERRAL FOR FEDERAL INVESTIGATION — 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8)

Possession of a Firearm While Subject to a Domestic-Violence Protective Order
Subject: Vincent Michael Hyler, 9501 Laughlin Way, Redwood Valley, Mendocino County, California
From: Carli Michelle Heller (protected party) · hellercwp@gmail.com · (239) 382-0668 · (410) 507-8198
Residence address confidential (domestic-violence victim; sealed, Lee County, Florida)
Date: September 28, 2026

TO:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives — San Francisco Field Division (Northern California), and ATF Tips (ATFTips@atf.gov; 1-888-283-8477).

United States Attorney, Northern District of California — San Francisco (Mendocino County lies in this District).

Copies: Mendocino County District Attorney (da@mendocinocounty.org), with whom a sworn state complaint on the same facts (Penal Code § 29825; Fam. Code § 6389) was filed today; State Attorney, Twentieth Judicial Circuit of Florida (stateattorney@sao20.org).

THE QUALIFYING ORDER

1. On March 18, 2025, I filed a Request for Domestic Violence Restraining Order against Vincent Michael Hyler in Mendocino County Superior Court (No. 25FL01032, consolidated with No. 25FL01030). On March 20, 2025, the court issued a Temporary Restraining Order and a Notice of Court Hearing. The order restrained Mr. Hyler from harassing, threatening, or contacting me and our infant son, and ordered him to surrender all firearms within 24 hours and file proof by March 23, 2025.

2. Mr. Hyler received actual notice of the hearing: the Mendocino County Sheriff's civil division personally served him with the order and the Notice of Court Hearing at 9501 Laughlin Way on March 21, 2025 at 9:30 AM (Proof of Personal Service, Form POS-020, Sheriff's file 25000214, e-filed March 24, 2025, stating "Hearing date: 04/10/2025, Time: 8:30 am"). He participated: he filed a Responsive Declaration on April 3, 2025, and the hearing was held on April 10, 2025. After that noticed hearing, the court entered a Findings and Order After Hearing filed May 13, 2025, continuing the restraints. The order remained in force until it was dismissed on July 3, 2025, through my then-counsel, as part of a global settlement placed on the record that day. (Record: Heller v. Superior Court, Cal. Ct. App. 1st Dist. No. A177556, Writ Exhibits 8–12 — Request for DVRO, Notice of Court Hearing, Temporary Restraining Order, Responsive Declaration, Findings and Order After Hearing.)

3. The order therefore meets 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8): it was issued after a hearing of which Mr. Hyler received actual notice and in which he had the opportunity to participate; it restrained him from harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner and the child of that partner; and it was entered on a record that included his recorded statement of March 16, 2025, at 3:01 AM — "if you don't, I'm gonna fucking kill you" — captured on the residence Ring camera with audio and video, two days before I applied for the order.

THE FIREARM

4. In or around December 2024, Vincent Michael Hyler acquired a Remington shotgun in a private transaction from a man he had met at a bar and brought to our shared home. The seller showed the firearm to me personally and, in substance, pointed out that it was unregistered or otherwise unaccounted for; I describe only what he said. That same evening I texted a friend by iMessage, timestamped December 2, 2024, 10:08 PM: "The manz just gave me an old Remington shotgun for Christmas made me think of you!!! lol" (my friend's dog is named Remington). The screenshot is preserved.

5. From acquisition until I left the shared residence in January 2025, the Remington was kept in the closet of the bedroom Mr. Hyler and I shared. In approximately January 2025 he moved it to the residence of his mother, Judy Hyler, at 9501 Laughlin Way, Redwood Valley. I did not see it again, and I have no knowledge of where it is today; I left that residence in January 2025 and have not been back.

6. On March 21, 2025, Deputy C.J. Denton of the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office personally served Mr. Hyler with the restraining order requiring surrender of all firearms and ammunition within 24 hours and proof of compliance within five days. On April 15, 2025, twenty-five days after service, Mr. Hyler transferred exactly two firearms to Chadwick Armory, FFL 9-68-05184, 109 Canyon Drive, Ukiah: a Winchester Model 70 Featherweight, serial 534695, and a Mauser M12 (serial number as stated on the receipt). The Receipt for Firearms (Form DV-800/JV-270) was e-filed with the Superior Court on April 16, 2025 at 8:00 AM (Doc ID 8b2a1c59a3c93a9aca60891795119f9770ec97b0).

7. On that DV-800, Section 7 asks: "Besides the items listed on page 2 or in an attached form, do you have or own any other firearms (guns), firearm parts, or ammunition?" Mr. Hyler checked "No" and signed under penalty of perjury on April 15, 2025. The Remington appears nowhere on the form and has never been disclosed to any court or agency.

8. Contemporaneous corroboration, April 22, 2025, inside the period the order was in force and a week after the sworn receipt. In the early morning I wrote to my father, Dan Heller, that I was going to check the firearm documents, "praying I don't see 'Remington' in there...cuz it just hit me that might be a big deal." At 5:05 AM I wrote him: "I don't see a Remington on this form..." Later that morning I wrote: "I am 100% sure it was a Remington. I texted Emily about it since that is her dog's name" and "The unregistered one." (Exhibit D.)

9. On July 6, 2026, a Florida court (Lee County No. 26-DR-031586, Hon. James D. Sloan) entered a temporary injunction for protection against domestic violence against Mr. Hyler with a further firearms-surrender directive; no surrender under that order is of record. I reported the undisclosed firearm and the false DV-800 to the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office in writing in September 2026.

WHY THIS IS URGENT

10. Since August 19, 2026, Mr. Hyler has held my two-year-old son, J.J.H. (born September 6, 2024; documented neurodevelopmental delays), in violation of the only custody determination in force (Findings and Order After Hearing, February 11, 2026, No. 25FL01030, registered in Florida September 22, 2026). My written requests for the child's location of August 21, 22, and 31, 2026 went unanswered, and on September 2, 2026 the Mendocino County Superior Court denied my

application to compel disclosure of his whereabouts. A person with a documented, unsurrendered firearm, a recorded death threat, two domestic-violence protective orders, a DUI conviction (Mendocino No. 25CR09666, March 2026), and current probation status is in physical control of a two-year-old whose location has not been disclosed to me. Enforcement proceedings are pending in the Florida Sixth District Court of Appeal (No. 6D2026-2448), the California Court of Appeal (No. A177556), Lee County (No. 26-DR-006457), and Mendocino County (Envelope 25308791, filed September 25, 2026). Any law-enforcement contact at the address should account for the firearm and the child. REQUEST

REQUEST

11. That ATF open an investigation into Mr. Hyler's possession of a firearm during the period March 20 – July 3, 2025 while subject to the qualifying order, and his possession since; that the United States Attorney consider charges under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8); and that this referral be coordinated with the Mendocino County District Attorney's Child Abduction Unit, which holds my sworn complaint submitted today and my written demands of September 8 and 18, 2026 under Family Code § 3131. Attached as exhibits: (A) the Mendocino Superior Court's September 2, 2026 denial of my application to compel disclosure of the child's whereabouts; (B) the DV-800/JV-270 receipt, Section 7 checked "No"; (C) the December 2, 2024 message; (D) the April 22, 2025 messages; (E) the carrier's delivery records of September 26, 2026 for the registered custody order. Every other document cited is available the same day on request: the March 18–20, 2025 filings and order; the Sheriff's Proof of Personal Service of March 21, 2025; the April 3, 2025 Responsive Declaration; the May 13, 2025 Findings and Order After Hearing; the DV-800/JV-270 receipt (Doc ID above) with Section 7 checked "No"; the December 2, 2024 iMessage screenshot; my April 22, 2025 iMessages to Dan Heller; the March 16, 2025 Ring recording and transcription; the July 6, 2026 Florida injunction; the February 11, 2026 custody order and its Florida registration.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct of my own knowledge, except as to matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters I believe them to be true. Executed on September 28, 2026 at Bonita Springs, Florida.



Carli Michelle Heller

DECLARATION OF CARLI MICHELLE HELLER REGARDING TELEPHONE CALL FROM LIEUTENANT CHAPMAN, MENDOCINO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Re: J.J.H., age 2 — Mendocino County Superior Court No. 25FL01030 (custody order of February 11, 2026); Lee County, Florida No. 26-DR-006457 (registered September 22, 2026); Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Report No. 2026-16870 (Penal Code § 278.5, taken September 7, 2026)

I, Carli Michelle Heller, declare:

1. I am the mother and sole physical custodian of J.J.H., born September 6, 2024, under the Findings and Order After Hearing of February 11, 2026 in Mendocino County Superior Court No. 25FL01030, registered in Lee County, Florida on September 22, 2026. I have personal knowledge of the facts stated here.

2. On September 28, 2026, I sent two written requests to the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office (records@mendocinosheriff.org), at 12:41 PM and 3:55 PM Eastern Time, asking that a deputy take my son into protective custody under Penal Code § 279.6, or conduct a welfare check on him, at 9501 Laughlin Way, Redwood Valley, or the other family residences named in the request, citing Report No. 2026-16870.

3. Shortly before 4:18 PM Eastern Time (1:18 PM Pacific Time) on September 28, 2026, I received a telephone call from a man who identified himself as Lieutenant Chapman of the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

4. Lieutenant Chapman told me that he had spoken with Investigator Guzman of the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office. I told him what I already understood from Investigator Guzman: that nothing would be happening. Lieutenant Chapman told me that the Sheriff's Office would not be doing anything either, and that it was taking the same position as the District Attorney's Office.

5. I specifically asked for a welfare check on my son. Lieutenant Chapman asked on what basis. I told him: the recorded death threat; the unsurrendered firearm; the father's inability to take care of the child even when sober; and other matters from the record. Lieutenant Chapman said that those were things that happened in the past. I said that they have gone unaddressed.

6. I told him that this was what I expected and thanked him for letting me know. I told him I was surprised that this was the office's position, given that Deputy Kroh and other deputies had been to that residence and would remember it, and that my son is two years old with neurodevelopmental delays from prenatal trauma. He did not change his position.

7. At the end of the call I asked for his badge number. He asked, "For what purposes?" I said, for the purpose of knowing his badge number. He was hesitant to give it; I had to ask at least twice; he repeated several times, "I already told you my name." He then gave badge number 1302. He would not give me his first name. In my experience no officer has ever tried to refuse me a badge number before.

8. His manner throughout the call was rude.

9. As of the time I sign this declaration, no deputy has contacted me to report a welfare check on my son in response to my requests of September 28, 2026.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Under penalties of perjury under the laws of the State of Florida, I declare that I have read the foregoing declaration and that the facts stated in it are true.

Executed on September 28, 2026, at Bonita Springs, Florida.

Carli Heller

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