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Testimony of Rep. Lois Galgay Reckitt
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
In Support of LD 351, An Act to Allow Municipalities to Prohibit Weapons at Municipal
Public Proceedings and Voting Places

Senator Rosen, Representative Warren and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, I am Representative Lois Galgay Reckitt and I represent District 31 in South Portland. I come before you to speak in support of **LD 351, An Act to Allow Municipalities to Prohibit Weapons at Municipal Public Proceedings and Voting Places.**

I chose to testify today because of my own experience with the system of voting in Maine.

I have worked in a variety of roles at polling places in South Portland over the years, including 24 years as a clerk and eight as warden in District 31. Safety hasn't always been a concern when working in these roles, but times are changing. Although polling places in my municipality are generally peaceful and the voters patient, occasionally tempers may flare.

This most recent election in particular brought about a number of worries in regards to safety, for voters but also for the clerks and wardens and other Election Day workers. That is why I stand before you in support of LD 351. Routine concerns were exacerbated by volatility of partisans on both sides of the various ballot measures.

This bill allows municipalities to decide whether it's necessary or not to prohibit weapons at polling locations. It does not ban weapons; it just gives the power back to the municipal level to determine whether or not further safety measurements are needed.

This bill is also forward thinking. It provides an exception for on-duty law enforcement officers, which I think is an important to include as we occasionally request a police presence if the town clerk or warden senses a need.

I hope you will join me in supporting the passage of LD 351. Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.