



SPORTSMAN'S ALLIANCE of MAINE

205 Church Hill Road, Suite 1, Augusta, Maine 04330-8210

Telephone: (207)623-4589

e-mail: david.trahan@sportsmansallianceofmaine.org

www.sportsmansallianceofmaine.org

Testimony in Support

LD 1761, An Act Regarding the Prohibition of a Firearm on School Property
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Written by David Trahan, Executive Director, Sportsman's Alliance of Maine
January 24, 2018

Senator Langley, Representative Kornfield, members of the Education and Cultural committee my name is David Trahan, the Executive Director of The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine testifying in support of LD 1761, An Act Regarding the Prohibition of a firearm on School Property.

LD 1761, would provide an important exemption for the possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle on public school property, or the property of an approved private school while dropping off or picking up a student. This legislation would protect law-abiding gun owners from inadvertently violating the law while dropping-off and picking-up their children from school. We see the bill as establishing a new layer of protection for the general public. First, I think we can all agree that a potential school shooter is not going to be affected by this legislation. They don't care about the laws they are breaking and this law won't do anything to change that fact.

Currently, in order to pick up your child and comply with the law you have two options: store the firearm in the car outside a perimeter of 500 feet from school property or leave your firearms at home; choices not very compatible for gun owners. We believe there are firearms in vehicles on school property every day, you just don't know about it. Your vehicle has the same constitutional protections from search and seizure as your home. The only time the existing federal ban on firearms in school parking lots can be enforced is when the firearm is in plain sight or it is found when searching a vehicle for another potential violation. It is extremely unlikely that the federal government is going to enforce the federal firearm prohibition, by passing a state law that mirrors federal law, it actually creates a much more viable system to educate Maine firearm owners on how to safely and appropriately secure a firearm when it is on school property, in addition, it creates a provision that requires the owner of that firearm to remain in the vehicle. If this law passes, Maine law enforcement will have a new tool to be able to insure any firearm on school property is properly stored and accompanied by an adult.

We don't appreciate opponents of this bill stating publicly that supporters of LD 1761 want guns in school. LD 1761 does not allow guns in school, it allows a firearm, when properly stored, locked up and monitored by its owner to be temporarily in a parking lot while they drop off a child. That, by all accounts is lying and we hope the committee will make that clear.