

Testimony of Lani Graham, MD, MPH
Freeport, Maine

IN SUPPORT OF LD 1068

An Act To Restrict Access to Weapons Pursuant to Court Order in Cases of Harassment

Presented by Senator Anne Carney

Before the Judiciary Committee, April 5, 2021

Senator Carney, Representative Harnett and Members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Lani Graham. I currently live in Freeport. I am a family practice physician and former Chief Public Health officer for Maine. I am a current member of the Public Health Committee for the Maine Medical Association. I am here to support this bill on behalf of the Maine Medical Association.

Considering the challenges of violence in Maine and across the nation, giving the courts the authority to keep weapons, including firearms, out of the hands of individuals who are presenting significant threats of violence, is a commonsense bill. This bill can be protective, not only of intimate partner victims, but also of potentially violent situations in schools or in the workplace.

Temporary protection from harassment can also be used in emergency situations, which may be the only way to address a seriously violent situation.

“Harassment” is not a casual description. A relatively high standard of threat against a person, family or business must be met.

For many years, judges have had the authority to prevent individuals under Protection from Abuse orders from possessing or acquiring weapons. This bill represents a reasonable companion of that authority. This represents another way to prevent violent crime in our communities.

We urge you to unanimously support LD 1068. Thank you for your attention. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have.