

Arthur DINGLEY
Auburn
LD 60

To: Chairs of the Joint Standing Committee, Hon. Senator Beebe-Center and Hon. Representative Salisbury, and members of the Committee.

Re: LD 60, An Act to Require a 72-hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a Firearm.

My name is Arthur Dingley. I am a former attorney, a retired physician, and a lifelong resident of Maine. I live in Auburn. This is testimony in opposition to LD 60.

I assume that LD 60 is a well-intentioned effort to reduce gun violence and self-harm in Maine. We have had little gun violence in Maine, despite a famously high rate of gun ownership, and there is no good evidence that it is on the rise. On the other hand, suicide by firearm has always been a problem here, typically the province of old White men who are socially isolated and drink. With respect to interpersonal violence, then, LD 60 is a solution in search of a problem. With respect to suicide, any person suffering long-standing emotional distress will still be suffering three days from now. Although there is evidence that some suicides ARE impulsive, the definition of impulsivity used in most reports is that the victim forms the intention to commit suicide five minutes before the act. The planful will continue to plan. The impulsive will act immediately.

So, what would LD 60 accomplish? In addition to burdening law-abiding Mainers without reason, it actually has the potential to deprive our most vulnerable citizens of their most effective means of self-defense when it is needed most. "Ex-boyfriend making threats to kill you? Well, just hide really well for the next three days."

Please, stop this incessant picking away at the edges of big national problems. Mainers should not have to shoulder the burdens of ineffective, but intrusive, state legislation passed as gut-level responses to horrific trends elsewhere in America. Our Congressional delegation should be leading the charge for implementation of broad-based, effective, strategies to reduce violence and suicide. Let's all "do something", yes - something that actually works, not just something that makes us feel like we've moved the dial.