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30 Association Drive, Box 190

Manchester, ME 04351

office: 207-480-4185

[www.maineaap.org](http://www.maineaap.org)

## Testimony in support of LD 22 'An Act to Impede the Transfer of Firearms to Prohibited Persons'

Honorable Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury and Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am a Portland resident, a pediatrician, a member of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Committee on Gun Safety, and a concerned citizen. I am writing today on behalf of the Maine AAP. The AAP is committed to protecting children from firearm related injuries and violence. We support LD 22 and encourage the committee to vote ought to pass on the bill as referred.

This bill arises out of a specific recommendation of the 2nd Annual Report of the Deadly Force Review Panel (the Panel) submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary in January 2022. In the report, the Panel noted that several of the individuals against whom deadly force was used were prohibited from firearm possession under existing law but were in possession of a firearm at the time of the deadly force incident. Noting that the presentation of firearms increased the dangerousness of the situation for the individual, responding law enforcement officers, and bystanders, the Panel recommended passage of a statute "intended to deter friends, acquaintances, family members or other individuals from selling or otherwise providing a firearm to another person when . . . the other person is prohibited from possessing a firearm for any of the reasons set forth in Title 15 MRSA, Section 393." (1)

This bill is in alignment with Federal Laws regarding sale and transfer of firearms but is not redundant to them. Maine can, and should, impose appropriate penalties on those who provide dangerous weapons to people whom we, as a state, have determined should not have access to such weapons. Expressly prohibiting this type of dangerous sale or transfer in both the Federal and Maine State Laws will increase the deterrent force and provide for prosecutorial discretion.

The proposed Bill simply, but appropriately, imposes an obligation on individuals to decline to sell or transfer firearms to prohibited individuals. Violators of this prohibition will be subject to punishment as a Class D crime. This closes the gap between the laws applying to commercial sellers and private sellers to keep Maine safer. In our view as pediatricians, increasing the safety of our communities will increase the health and well-being of our children. Please support LD 22 to keep firearms out of the hands of people who the state has already decided should not be permitted to have them.

Kristine M. Pleacher, MD