

# Maine Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Joe Anderson. I am a resident of Portland, a hospital-based pediatrician, and I sit on the Board of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I am writing today in **support of LD 22, An Act to Impede the Transfer of Firearms to Prohibited Persons.**

As individuals in positions of leadership or influence in our communities, I'm sure you've been asked the question "What keeps you up at night?" As a pediatrician, that issue is gun violence. I have cared for children and teenagers who have suffered life-altering injuries or death as a result of firearms far more often than I care to admit. Their injuries are seared into my memory and serve as a constant reminder of how unbelievably easy it is in this country for children and teenagers to have their lives interrupted by firearms, made possible by weak policies regarding gun safety.

Gun violence is a public health crisis in the US, where deaths by firearms have outpaced motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of death for children and teens aged 1 to 19 in the United States.<sup>1</sup> There are significant opportunities to improve these statistics with gun safety policies that are supported by a majority of Americans, and in many cases by most gun owners as well.

**LD 22** prohibits the sale or transfer of a firearm to a person who is prohibited from owning a firearm. If an individual is prohibited from owning a firearm in the state of Maine, we agree that it should be a crime to sell or transfer a firearm to such a person.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is committed to protecting children from firearm-related injury and violence. We support specific measures to reduce the destructive effects of guns in the lives of children and adolescents. We urge each of you to consider the potential lives you could save as a result of supporting LD 22.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Anderson" followed by a stylized "DO" monogram.

Joe Anderson, DO, FAAP

Co-Chair, Advocacy Committee

Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics