

Hillary Shende
Brunswick
LD 1557

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennen, and esteemed members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, My name is Hillary Shende, and I am here to testify against LD 1557.

Like LD 52, the most important thing you need to know about this bill is whether the presence of firearms - in any circumstance - actually makes people safer from violence or not. And despite some folks' claims that you can find a study that proves anything you want, this simply isn't true. There are scientifically sound studies, and there are flawed studies. And the scientifically sound studies are the ones that speak truth. In every case, the scientifically sound studies have all found the same thing: the presence of firearms in any location makes that location LESS safe, not MORE safe, from gun violence. Studies published by The American Academy of Physicians, the Oxford University Press, The National Institutes of Health, Scientific American, the Rand Corporation, Harvard University, the journal Nature, the New England Journal of Medicine, Boston University, The Kaiser Family Foundation and many others all concluded that the presence of firearms significantly INCREASES the risk that people in that vicinity will experience gun violence.

So the facts are clear. If you vote for this bill, you are voting to increase the likelihood of gun violence in Maine schools. Period.

So please vote against it.

Thanks for your time.