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Testimony in support of LD 1340 – ‘An Act to Prohibit the Sale or Possession of Rapid-fire Modification Devices’

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 Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Committee on Gun Safety, and a mother. I am writing today on behalf of the Maine AAP.

We support LD 1340 and encourage the committee to vote ought to pass on the bill as referred.

We support this legislation as it will help to prevent a mass shooting in Maine. This bill prohibits possession of Rapid-fire modification devices to semi-automatic firearms. These devices do not have a place in hunting or self-defense but can only be useful if the intent is to harm as many people as possible.

Last November Mainers were horrified when active shooter hoax calls were made to ten high schools. The hoax was all too believable due to the number of mass-shootings that happen around the country each month. I was at home when I received the phone call asking if I could come to work to help with a mass-casualty situation. I said yes without hesitation. It was over an hour before the notification went out that it was a hoax. I spent that hour hoping that I would have the skills to save lives, hoping that a rapid-fire weapon was not in use as the number of casualties would be so much greater.

Children, because of their size, are in particular danger when rapid-fire firearms are involved. A colleague of mine at the Washington University of St. Louis has shared anecdotally that while their mortality rate with children with injuries from manually-operated firearms is <10% it is multiple times higher when assault-weapons are involved. Semi-automatic rifles fire at four times the muzzle velocity of a handgun,ⁱ can liquify organs,ⁱⁱ and can leave a body unrecognizable.ⁱⁱⁱ

We were lucky that there wasn't an active shooter in multiple Maine schools that day. We need you to pass this legislation to help prevent this in the future. **Please support LD 1340 and recognize that rapid-fire modification devices serve no lawful purpose.**

Kristine M. Pleacher, MD, FAAP

ⁱ Everytown Research and Policy [Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines | Everytown Research & Policy](#) Accessed 04/02/2023.

ⁱⁱ Karlis N. A surgeon explains why AR-15-style rifles are so deadly. *Salon*. July 12, 2022. [A surgeon explains why AR-15-style rifles are so deadly | Salon.com](#) Accessed 04/02/2023.

ⁱⁱⁱ Levenson M. Parents were asked for DNA samples to help identify victims. *The New York Times* May 25, 2022. [Parents Were Asked to Give DNA Samples to Help Identify Victims - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#) Accessed 04/02/2023.