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LD 1340

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Hillary Shende, and I am here to testify in favor of LD's 1340 and 1011.

I am in favor of these bills because the level of gun violence we are enduring in this country is intolerable, and we must do something about it. I will not stand idly by while my fellow Americans are being mowed down by the tens of thousands every year, especially when there are laws we can pass that will lessen the carnage. LD's 1340 and 1011 are two of those laws.

As I've said in previous testimony to this committee, allowing every single Mainer unfettered access to weapons of war is a glaring gap in Maine's public safety policies. Rapid fire modification devices, which are designed to turn semi-automatic weapons into machine guns, have no place in a civil society. Machine guns are prohibited for a reason - they have no purpose other than to kill large numbers of people as quickly as possible. Like tanks and grenades, they are for war zones, not civilian living. As you all know, it is thanks to the ready availability of these bump stock devices that scores of people were slaughtered in Las Vegas a few years back. Without the bump stocks, the body count in that incident would have been far lower.

No civilian needs a rapid fire modification device to go hunting or for self protection, either. In fact, hunting with such a device attached to your firearm is against Maine hunting laws, not to mention it's going to really tear up your venison.

As for LD 1011, I support this bill because it is another common sense law that can reduce gun violence. If stolen firearms are reported, law enforcement officers will have a much easier job solving crimes, especially since many guns used to commit crimes were first stolen from their rightful owners. The requirement to report a missing firearm will also incentivize gun owners to keep better track of their firearms, making it less likely that those weapons are taken by an angry family member and used to shoot up a school.

Passing laws like LD's 1340 and 1011 are common sense measures we can take to reverse the steep upward trend of gun violence. Please take them as soon as possible.