

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Cam Shannon. I grew up in Orono and am now a resident of Yarmouth. I am the chair of the Maine Gun Safety Coalition. I am speaking today in support of “LD 1340: An Act to Prohibit the Sale or Possession of Rapid-fire Modification Devices” and “LD 1011: An Act Requiring the Reporting of Stolen Firearms”. These are both common sense, evidence-based policies that, if enacted, will reduce gun violence and save lives.

Rapid-fire modification devices can be used to convert semi-automatic weapons into deadly automatic weapons of war, shooting 15 rounds or more a second – or 900 rounds in a minute. The shooter in Las Vegas who killed 58 people and injured nearly 500 used such a device.

These devices make it harder for police to intervene. They turn a terrible and deadly moment into a massacre. The Uvalde shooter had a rapid-fire modification device, which he thankfully never used. It’s unbearable to think of what could have happened had he done so. We would be mourning more than the 19 children and two teachers. It’s unthinkable.

Worryingly, in the past five years, these devices have become more commonplace. They are showing up in more crime scenes and being recovered in greater numbers by the ATF. Maine should join with the 13 other states, including Vermont and Massachusetts, that have already banned such devices. These devices have no place while hunting in our woods and they have no place in our towns or schools. I urge you to pass this common sense, overdue, public safety measure.

Regarding LD 1011, the mandatory reporting of stolen firearms is a reasonable, common sense gun safety measure that will help save Maine and American lives. Mandatory reporting helps to prevent the trafficking of firearms. Research suggests that reporting requirements reduce the risk that a gun will be purchased in one state and used in a crime in another state by 30%. Such a policy could save American lives because Maine is a known source state for guns. Mandatory reporting of stolen firearms also discourages straw purchases, and thus helps keep guns out of the hands of those prohibited from having them. Finally, mandatory reporting also encourages gun owners to safely store their firearms. Safe storage is an important practice that responsible gun owners use to protect our communities – keeping our children safe from accidental discharge and protecting our teens in crisis from an impulsive suicide attempt.

To conclude, I urge you – I beg you – to pass LD 1340 and LD 1011. Both bills are common sense, evidence-based policies that will save lives.