

James Waite  
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LD 2224

I'm writing in opposition to LD 2224, An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System.

This bill includes a slew of anti-gun policies including Universal Background Checks and Red Flag laws that infringe on the Constitutional rights of Mainers and do nothing to address issues surrounding the recent tragedy in Lewiston.

**Universal Background Checks:** If passed, this bill would require a NICS background check on all advertised sales in Maine, regardless of the relationship between the buyer and seller. In her State of the State address, Governor Mills highlighted that she would be proposing Universal Background Checks to close the gun show loophole and stop Mainers from buying firearms off Facebook. First and foremost, there is no gun-show loophole. All purchases through Federal Firearms Licensees are required to go through background checks regardless of location or where the sale takes place. Additionally, Facebook already bans firearm sales on their website, highlighting a further misunderstanding of firearm sales by the Mills administration. Additionally, this bill puts Mainers at risk of becoming felons for the simple act of transferring a firearm to a family member, friend, or neighbor.

As Mainers already know, the Universal Background Check scheme only impacts law-abiding Mainers from selling and transferring firearms to individuals they already know are not prohibited. Criminals will ignore this law and continue to obtain firearms illegally. That is why they shot down Mike Bloomberg's million-dollar Universal Background Check scheme in 2016, and bipartisan lawmakers vote this perennial bill down every time it comes to the floor. Despite these rejections, and the fact that the Lewiston shooter passed all background checks, anti-gun advocates are once again attempting to push this national agenda in Maine.

**Red Flag Laws:** In addition to proposing failed Universal Background Checks, this bill also seeks to expand Maine's current Yellow Flag law to Red Flag "Extreme Risk Protection Order" laws. These laws strip citizens of their Second Amendment rights without due process based on weak and nebulous standards. If passed, Maine's Red Flag law could strip Mainers of their Constitutional rights for up to 30 days without a hearing and evidence based on hearsay. It does not include any penalties for erroneous accusations, allowing for an open season against gun owners in Maine.

I urge this committee to vote "Ought Not To Pass" on LD 2224.