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OLD ORCHARD BEACH  
LD 2238

I'm writing in opposition to LD 2238, An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases.

There is no evidence that waiting periods reduce violent crime. If passed, this bill would deny the right of self-defense to abuse victims or any individual facing an imminent threat. Additionally, waiting periods would destroy Maine's hunting tourism industry because guides would be unable to provide hunters with firearms and local firearm dealers would be unable to sell and transfer firearms in a timely manner.

The average "time-to-crime" for firearms traced by the ATF in 2017 was over nine years, so the anecdotal evidence about a person who purchases a firearm and then immediately uses it to harm themselves or somebody else are just that: anecdotal. There is no scientific evidence that waiting periods have an effect on suicide, homicide, or mass shootings.

Criminals will not be affected by waiting periods. Most state inmates who were in possession of a firearm at the time of their arrest obtained the firearm through an illegal source or from a friend or family member.

Proponents of the waiting period claim it is a "cooling off period" that supposedly gives the prospective buyer time to reconsider their intentions and protect against impulsive actions. This argument has no logical basis. Most gun-owners own more than one firearm, and a waiting period could not possibly have an effect on those purchasing an additional firearm. First-time buyers seeking a firearm for self-defense would be affected by a waiting period that limits their ability to safeguard themselves and their loved ones.

Waiting periods were once part of federal law, mandated by the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993, but only until the National Instant Criminal Check (NICS) came online in 1998. The five-day waiting period mandated under the Brady Bill was replaced with the instant check system. While most checks are instant, the FBI actually has three days to complete the background check before the transfer can proceed. The investigation can continue well past three days, and, in cases in which the firearm was transferred after the three-day window, the case is referred to the ATF for retrieval of the firearm.

LD 60, An Act to Require a 72-hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a Firearm, was voted down in 2023, but here we are again. When will "No" ever be enough for you people. This bill does nothing but infringe on the Constitutional rights of Mainers and does nothing to address the issues surrounding the recent tragedy in Lewiston.

I urge this committee to vote "Ought Not To Pass" on LD 2238.