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LD 2238

I urge to vote 'ought not to pass' on LD2338.

A waiting-period would have the consequence of delaying needed self-protection for people, primarily women, in domestic abuse situations! As a reminder for the committee the police have no obligation to protect you, nor does your employer, nor the courts.

Other benefits that the sponsor(s) have suggested are either minimal or actually not possible.

1. Federal law already provides a 3 day period to complete background checks through the NICS system. So a waiting period of 3 days has NO possibility of giving any law enforcement agency additional time. 99% of NICS delays are resolved in the 3 day period and the number of guns transferred while research is still pending is truly trivial and those are generally recovered (see below). And recent NICS processing changes (2022) provide that the dates can be extended in certain circumstances and further that the NICS notify local law enforcement about denials and delays. Any competent local law enforcement agency should be able to determine if additional action is required in the period they have to work with. Furthermore even when the denial comes after the 3 days the ATF attempts to recover the weapon and does so in almost all cases (e.g., recent study 116 of the 125 guns recovered in an sample performed by the Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice). This is NOT a reason to support a waiting period.

2. The suicide situation has been studied extensively in waiting period States (primarily California because it has/had one of the longest waiting periods and a population large enough for statistics to work and so makes study easier). Evidence from purchasers in California found that, although almost no firearm suicides were committed during the state's waiting period, the most elevated relative risk of firearm suicide occurred in the first week after receipt of the weapon following the waiting period. (Wintemute et al., 1999). A more recent analysis of handgun owners in California found that the risk of firearm suicide was highest immediately following the end of the state's waiting period, but more than half of all firearm suicides among handgun owners occurred more than one year after the purchase application (Studdert et al., 2020). Moreover, most firearms are purchased by individuals who already own a firearm. There is little to no evidence that waiting periods reduce suicides in any meaningful way. And in line with my comments on Lewiston what is needed is better access to mental health resources for people who are in a mental health crisis overall and that will have a much more meaningful impact on helping suicidal people. I'm normally a conservative fiscal person, but spending more money on our mental health system is a cause I do support. Waiting periods are not a meaningful answer to suicide.

3. There is no evidence that waiting periods reduce homicide rates. Maine is an incredibly safe state, joined in New England by New Hampshire and Vermont neither of which have waiting periods. And the States with serious homicide problems like Illinois and California do. There is no relationship between the two that research can determine. Its false to think that waiting periods reduce homicides.

Once again I urge you to vote "ought not to pass".
Regards,