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LD 2224

I want to thank the Committee Chairs and Committee Members for considering my testimony on the bills before you.

I am writing in support of LD 2224 and LD 2238.

I was not shocked by the horrific tragedy in Lewiston in October, but I was heartbroken. I had spent years working with various groups to get common sense gun laws passed in Maine with some but not enough successes. I had spoken about my fear that there would be a tragic event in Maine involving guns because not enough people were willing to stand up for stronger gun safety legislation. And with the tragedy in Lewiston, my worst nightmare happened.

Now the time has come to us, the tragedy has happened. So what do you, our representatives, do to ensure the people of Maine that you understand the need for stricter gun laws?

I say you look with greater urgency at the lax gun legislation in Maine. You vote for LD 2224 to strengthen Background Checks. You vote to update the Extreme Risk Protection Order to streamline the existing process. And knowing the high rate of suicide by guns in Maine, you institute LD 2238 the 72 Hour Waiting Period because studies have shown that this saves lives.

Our state is a model, a leader, in preserving natural resources. It is a privilege to live in this magnificent state. Often when I drive out of state, people seeing the Maine license plate tell me how much they loved visiting Maine or how they would like to visit Maine and how lucky I was to be able to live in Maine. But in November 2023, when someone saw the license, he talked about the tragedy in Lewiston and said he was shocked to learn how lax our gun laws were. This is not the way Maine should be remembered.

I look to you, our representatives, to be the leaders on the issue of gun safety legislation. To take the actions necessary to keep us safe from gun violence. To once again be a model by enacting LD 2224 and LD 2238.

Thank you for reading my testimony.
Mary Voskian, Bremen