

March 4, 2024

The Honorable Joseph Baldacci
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Maine Senate
Cross Building, Room 209
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Michele Meyer
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Maine House of Representatives
Cross Building, Room 209
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Anne Carney
Chair, Judiciary Committee
Maine Senate
State House, Room 438
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Matt Moonen
Chair, Judiciary Committee
Maine House of Representatives
State House, Room 438
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: AMA support for legislation to prevent firearm-related injuries and deaths

Dear Chairs Baldacci, Carney, Meyer, and Moonen:

On behalf of the physician and student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for legislation that will address the epidemic of firearm violence in Maine and across the country. With more than 48,000 firearm-related deaths each year, firearm violence is a serious public health crisis. Tragically, these deaths are entirely preventable.

As physicians, we see firsthand the carnage resulting from gun violence, as well as the long-term consequences for individuals, their families, and their communities. In addition to the direct impact to victims and their families and friends, firearm-related violence has broader societal and economic impacts on medical and mental health care systems, communities, workplaces, schools, police, and the criminal justice system. As advocates for our patients and stewards of the public health, we are committed to preventing gun violence. We believe that the epidemic of gun violence requires comprehensive, multifaceted public health solutions and that the following bills represent important elements of such an approach. As such, we strongly urge you to pass these bills:

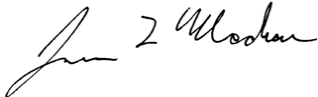
- Legislative Document (LD) 2237 - An Act to Strengthen Public Safety, Health and Well-being by Expanding Services and Coordinating Violence Prevention Resources. AMA policy supports many of the initiatives in this comprehensive legislation, and applauds the investment in violence prevention strategies, access to behavior health services, suicide prevention, and crisis intervention programs. (Policies [H-145.975](#), [D-345.972](#), [H-345.972](#), and [H-60.937](#))
- LD 2086 - An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Disposition of Forfeited Firearms. The AMA supports removal of firearms from prohibited persons. (Policy [H-145.972](#))

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- LD 2224 - An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System. AMA Policy advocates for a waiting period and background check for all firearm purchasers and policies that prevent transfer of firearms without adhering to background checks. The AMA also applauds efforts to expand access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment. (Policies [H-145.996](#) and [H-145.975](#))
- LD 2238 - An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchase. AMA Policy supports legislation that enforces a waiting period and background check for all firearm purchasers. (Policy [H-145.996](#))

It is imperative that we address gun violence as a public health problem and work together to develop effective violence prevention strategies. The legislation pending before your respective committees takes important steps toward that goal and will save lives. We thank you for the opportunity to express our support for these bills. If the AMA can be of assistance, please contact Annalia Michelman, JD, senior attorney, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at annalia.michelman@ama-assn.org or (312) 464-4788.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James L. Madara".

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Maine Medical Association