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YARMOUTH
LD 2238

LD 2238 - An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases

As a mother, resident of Maine, and public health epidemiologist with 20 years of experience, I strongly support LD 2238 - An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases.

Maine has no waiting period law. The immediate purchase and acquisition of a gun allows people to act on temporary emotions and impulses, which can increase the risk of both gun suicide and gun homicide.

Suicide attempts are often impulsive, singular episodes that involve little planning.

Many studies suggest that most suicide survivors contemplated their actions for only a brief period of time—often less than 24 hours—before making a suicide attempt. Similarly, studies suggest that some of the factors that lead to violence against others, such as anger and rage, can be short-lived.

Waiting period laws, which create a buffer between the time of gun purchase and gun acquisition, can help to prevent impulsive acts of gun violence. In particular, studies suggest that waiting period laws prevent firearm suicides and firearm homicides. Studies suggest that waiting period laws are associated with reduced rates of firearm suicide. By one estimation, waiting period laws may reduce firearm suicide rates by 7–11%.

By requiring a brief cooling off period between the purchase and possession of a firearm, we can save lives from gun violence while preserving Maine's strong traditions of responsible gun ownership and respect for Second Amendment rights.

Thank you,
Kate Ahrens