

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and distinguished sponsors of LD 2224, I am Phyllis Chinlund from Brunswick, one of 28 senior citizens of the Thornton Oaks Retirement Community Social Justice Group. Like so many others we were stunned at the nearby events in Lewiston on October 25, and distressed to learn how weak Maine's gun safety laws were. Our only hope was that, in the immediate aftermath, it seemed likely that Maine would adopt a red flag law and other gun safety measures.

Therefore we are both grateful for Governor Mills' call to action, and disappointed that it falls short of full extreme risk protection, or red flag law.

Linking action to remove guns to a mental health diagnosis narrows the options for gun safety unnecessarily. During my 25 years as a clinical social worker, the only gun-related violence perpetrated by a client was a suicide. I helped individuals work through grievances that were potentially dangerous for friends and family. If you had met them you would not have thought them mentally ill. Often it is a family member on the receiving end of anger who will be the first to recognize danger. Let's not put barriers between them and a court action to remove firearms before it's too late.

And so this retired social worker and her 27 fellow members of the Thornton Oaks Social Justice Group urge you to pass LD 2224 with language amended to strengthen the yellow flag to red. Thank you.

Phyllis Chinlund  
Brunswick  
LD 2224

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Thank you for this opportunity.