

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary:

My name is Corliss Davis; I live in Belfast; and I am testifying in strong support of the Governor's bill LD2224 "An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System," sponsored by Senator Margaret Rotundo of Androscoggin.

I am grateful to Governor Mills for taking in the shocking tragedy of the mass shooting in Lewiston last October and proposing this bill to reduce the chances of such an event happening here again. I believe that LD2224 is the bill most likely to deliver meaningful gun safety reform for Maine citizens this year, but I respectfully hope that it can be strengthened.

I believe that the Yellow Flag law as written in LD2224 should be made stronger so that family members and not just law enforcement could ask a court to remove weapons from a loved one in crisis. This issue strikes home with me personally. Fifty years ago, my beautiful, blonde youngest sister was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Anti-psychotic medications were not effective as they are today and my parents struggled to manage her mood swings and angry behavior. There were no firearms in our home, but I shudder to think what might have happened if there had been. Our love for those afflicted with such tragic brain disorders should lead us to do what we can to ensure their safety and that of their families as well. I am grateful that improvements in medication and treatment have much improved my sister's life. We need to give our families here in Maine more help in getting weapons away from their loved ones in times of crisis – hopefully also without also requiring that they be taken into protective custody.

Another component of LD2224 for which I urge your support as written is requiring background checks for all advertised private gun sales. This puts no burden on Maine's responsible gun owners and I've read that 90% of these background checks are resolved in just a few minutes. My hope is that this would reduce the number of domestic violence incidents involving guns as well as the sales of firearms to people convicted of violent crimes.

I urge you to strengthen and support Governor Mills' significant efforts to fill gaps in Maine's current firearms laws and keep us all safer in the future. Please vote ought to pass on an improved LD2224.

Thank you.

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