

Ellen Steinbart  
Brunswick  
LD 2224

Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. My name is Ellen Steinbart. I am a retired nurse living in Brunswick. I wish to provide testimony in support of LD2224.

On January 12, 1995, there was a shooting at Garfield High School in Seattle, WA, where my daughter was a student. The shooter used a semiautomatic weapon. No one died, but two students were injured, including my daughter's friend, who was sitting near her. The school called me at work and told me there had been a shooting, that my daughter was not wounded, but she was very upset. I raced to the school. I will never forget the terror I felt.

Since 1995, gun violence in the US has taken on epidemic proportions. 41,000 Americans die annually from gun violence. Gun violence is now the leading cause of death for American children. Maine has the highest gun death rate in New England, much of it due to firearm suicide. On October 25, 2023, 18 people were killed and 13 more injured, in shootings in Lewiston. I believe we can and must take action to improve Maine's gun safety laws to help prevent further tragedies in Maine.

I strongly support LD2224, which would require background checks on gun sales by unlicensed sellers, enhance Maine's yellow flag law, and establish mental health crisis centers throughout Maine.

Sincerely,

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