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Bowdoinham  
LD 2283

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Testimony in Support of LD 2283, An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Jeremy Cluchey. I am a resident of Bowdoinham, where I live with my wife and two children. I am also a gun owner and hunter.

I am testifying today in support of LD 2283. Following October's mass shooting, it is clear to me that we need more tools in Maine to address gun violence. As we consider those tools, it is vital that we balance the need to ensure public safety with the constitutional imperative to protect individual liberties.

I believe that a true Extreme Risk Protection Order law like the one proposed by this bill strikes that balance well. It is a reasonable, common sense step our state can take to better address the needs of individuals who are in crisis and pose a risk to themselves and others. Being in crisis is not the same as having a mental illness, so this law would be a fitting complement to Maine's existing Yellow Flag law.

Much has been made about what gun safety laws could have prevented October's tragedy. I believe that misses the point, and we need to be thinking more broadly about protecting our communities. When a road is washed out by a big storm, we don't rebuild it to the precise specifications that would allow it to survive only that exact same storm and no other; instead, we recognize that storms are becoming increasingly violent, and we strengthen our infrastructure to withstand all types of weather events. That is how we protect our communities and our citizens.

I believe that same approach is needed here. Adding a true Extreme Risk Protection Order to our state's toolkit for managing these complex situations, as 21 other states have done, would be a measured response to the shooting and the awful reality it represents.

Responsible gun owners understand that protecting our rights and protecting public safety are not mutually exclusive. A true Extreme Risk Protection Order law strikes that balance well. Thank you for your time and attention, and I hope you will support LD 2283.