



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Sally Cluchey

15 Brickyard Way
Bowdoinham, ME 04008
Phone: (207) 814-8879
Sally.Cluchey@legislature.maine.gov

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**Testimony of Rep. Sally Cluchey in support of LD 2283, An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary**

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Sally Cluchey and I proudly represent the communities of Bowdoinham, Bowdoin and Richmond.

I am writing to share my support for LD 2283. Four years ago, the Legislature passed a law to address gun violence and mental illness -- what we call the Yellow Flag law. That law is expressly for the purpose of preventing people with diagnosed mental illnesses from committing gun violence against themselves or others. While this is a useful tool for our state to have in its toolbox, it's only one of many that we need.

As we know from national studies, people with mental illness are the victims of gun violence far more frequently than they are the perpetrators of it. What Maine lacks is a mechanism to help people who are in crisis from doing harm to themselves or others. One does not have to have a mental illness to be in crisis, which can be brought on by many factors, including loss of a job, loss of a relationship, loss of stability, and a sense of a loss of control. When that happens, it is critical that the Legislature provides the tools for rapid, temporary intervention during that crisis. Among other things, this will be a vital initiative for reducing Maine's rates of suicide, which constitute nearly 90 percent of our state's gun deaths.

This thoughtful legislation before you today strikes an important balance between protecting individual rights and promoting public safety. By placing the burden of proof on the petitioner and imposing severe penalties for perjury, the bill ensures robust due process protections. Temporary firearm relinquishment also offers a compassionate alternative to detaining individuals, which can compound the trauma of people already in crisis. By temporarily removing firearms from those in crisis, we can mitigate the risk of harm to both individuals and the public at large.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter. I hope you will pass LD 2283 swiftly so that we can end this session having made a thoughtful, measured step that both respects individual liberties and will prevent gun-related harm in our communities.