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Testimony of Representative Gerry Runte

LD 2283 An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public

Senator Carney, Representative Moonan, and members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary, I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on this vital bill.

Gun ownership and the Second Amendment have been part of American culture since the nation was founded. Along with this fundamental right comes the responsibility to ensure personal and community safety: the government is responsible for ensuring that safety and one way to do so is through sensible regulation.

Early in my campaign to run for office, in May of 2022, two tragic events occurred: the Uvalde mass shooting and the death of a child in Wells amidst a domestic violence situation. I began researching Maine gun laws and was amazed to find how lax they were.

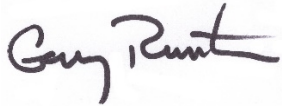
The Gifford National Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence publishes a scorecard on the strength of each state's common-sense gun laws. Maine's score is D-. That score results from the fact that Maine lacks universal background checks, assault weapon restrictions, large-capacity magazine bans, waiting periods, and extreme-risk protection orders. LD 2283 would enact an essential element in this portfolio of sensible regulation.

LD 2283 is a crucial tool in preventing gun violence and saving lives. It enhances community safety by temporarily restricting firearm access for individuals deemed a threat to themselves or others. One of the key benefits is the ability to intervene before tragedy strikes. LD 2283 provides a means to act swiftly and temporarily remove firearms from potentially dangerous situations. By focusing on individuals showing signs of potentially violent behavior rather than waiting for a crime to occur, LD 2283 would provide a meaningful step toward reducing gun violence, including suicides and mass shootings. This preventive mechanism respects due process while prioritizing public safety, representing a balanced approach to gun control.

Nineteen states and the District of Columbia, including four in New England, have enacted extreme risk protection laws as critical elements in their gun violence protection policies. It is time for Maine to do likewise.

Please vote "ought to pass."

I appreciate your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerry Runte". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "G" and "R".

Gerry Runte