

Alicia Lawson
Winthrop
LD 2283

Members of the Judiciary:

My name is Alicia Lawson, I'm a Winthrop resident, mother of 5, and NRA certified firearms instructor and NRA certified Range Safety Officer.

As someone deeply invested in firearms training, I'm here to voice my heartfelt opposition LD 2283

Since the tragic events in Lewiston, I've witnessed a remarkable surge in interest from women seeking firearms training. Many of these women are not politically aligned with me.

And one of these women is a survivor of the Lewiston shooting.

Women's firearms classes, at the academy where I work, have been booking out months in advance, highlighting a growing recognition of the importance of self-defense. We simply have not been able to keep up with the demand.

In our firearm classes we teach the importance of being our own first responders. Especially in rural areas of Maine where it can take 15-25 minutes or more for police to respond.

This idea is also supported by many law enforcement personnel who recognize they cannot be everywhere at once.

Responsible gun owners play a crucial role in ensuring safety and security in our communities. It's in our best interest that responsible individuals have the means to defend themselves and their loved ones.

By imposing red flag laws, we are not only infringing upon individuals' rights but also potentially leaving people defenseless in the face of imminent threats.

It is essential to recognize that firearms are tools for self-defense, particularly for those who may be physically vulnerable.

I shared my own story of surviving a domestic violence attack with this committee last month and how firearms training has given me my life back, I no longer live in fear.

It seems our government would prefer to keep its citizens in fear rather than protecting their rights. After all, I know first hand the transformative impact training has on one's self confidence.

Of course I hope that this is not true. And today you have the ability to prove me wrong by voting in opposition to this bill.

You each swore an oath to uphold the constitution, and I'll remind you of the language contained within the second amendment:

"The right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Thank you