

Wayne Richardson
South Portland
LD 2283

Thank you members of the Judiciary Committee for allowing me to submit testimony in favor of LD 2283, An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order to Protect the Safety of Maine.

My name is Wayne Richardson of South Portland, Maine. I am a gun owner, life-long hunter of deer, turkey and other fowl. Most importantly I'm husband and a father. I am also a broken father of a daughter, Darien who was killed by gun violence in 2010 right here in Maine – her shooting and murder unsolved to this day. I am committed to preventing others from living with the pain caused by gun violence. There are many things we can do to prevent gun violence and this bill is one of them.

I grew up in Portland and my father taught me to hunt at a very early age. In fact, he taught hunter safety classes and was a member of the Falmouth Rod & Gun Club. My father was also a licensed gun dealer and a Cumberland County Deputy Sheriff. He taught me and my brothers how to handle firearms and the respect and responsibility that comes with it. Together we all enjoyed many seasons of hunting and many years shooting at the range.

Maine has a long history of families getting together enjoying this wonderful sport just as my family did. Maine has a long history of responsible gun owners who just enjoy being out at a shooting range. I believe in the 2nd Amendment and the responsibility that comes with it. My brothers and friends who are gun owners and hunters like me adhere to safe gun handling, practices and storage as do many if not most Maine gun owners. This bill is not about them. This bill is not intended to take guns away from responsible gun owners. This bill is about saving lives. Please don't listen to the rhetoric that this bill will only affect law abiding gun owners, that is simply not true. Maine has a high rate of domestic violence and suicide and a gun in those situations makes the situation much more dangerous and even lethal. As an experienced hunter I know the damage caused by bullets and how lethal guns are. As a dad, I've also seen the damage the bullets can do to the human body and witnessed the pain and suffering my daughter Darien endured after being shot before she died as result of a gun. Responsible gun ownership and gun violence prevention are not incompatible. As a gun owner I believe in safety first.

I'm in support of LD 2283 and believe this is a great tool for family members and law enforcement to have. When a person is in crisis and considering suicide, family members are often the first to see the warning signs. If needed in a situation when a person is deemed a danger to themselves or others and there is enough evidence for a judge to decide to temporarily remove firearms from that person. Temporarily removing access to firearms using extreme risk protection orders has been shown to decrease suicide rates. Once the person gets the help they need and is no longer deemed a threat the firearms are returned to them. This bill is about savings lives and keeping the community safe.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD 2288. Thank you.

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