

Janice Vance
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LD 486

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and member of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety: I cannot attend the March 17 public hearing, but I would like to go on record as opposing LD 486. Republicans seem to introduce this same bill every session, and it's just as misguided now as it was the first time it came up for consideration. The 30 states that have a so-called "shoot first" law have seen an average 8% increase in homicides, with 30-50 people dying every month because the law allows them to dispense with normal conflict resolution attempts and simply whip out a gun. I think of the young Black boy last year who went to pick up his sibling at a friend's house, went to the wrong address, and knocked on the door of an older white man, who immediately shot the boy. I think of the fact my idiot brother-in-law in rural Virginia keeps a shotgun next to his kitchen door, paranoid that "somebody might come on my property." (We don't visit them anymore.) I think of Robert Card, who could have easily shot the sheriff who came to Card's house after reports that Card was delusional and in possession of multiple guns, before he went off to kill 18 innocent people. There is absolutely NO reason to have a "shoot first" law in Maine.