
Monique Culbertson

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March 17, 2025

Testimony in Opposition to LD 486

To the Criminal Justice and Safety Committee:

I am new at providing testimony, yet felt compelled to do so as this proposed legislation completely redefines self defense and will increase the number of deaths by gun violence in Maine should it pass. I am a retired educator who continues to work part-time in a small rural pre-K-5 school setting. I write because I do not want to see more lives needlessly lost to gun violence.

Standing your ground is not self defense, it is a form of aggression, particularly if there is a reasonable way out and a choice is made not to take it. That is not self defense. Self defense implies no choice, no other option, but to defend oneself. Having an alternative option and choosing not to take it is aggression, and in the worst possible outcome, that leads to needlessly taking a life.

The data is clear, as a result of this type of legislation across the country, 30 - 50 people are dying every month. There has been an 8% increase in homicides across the country with laws like this one. Source: Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

If I, or my sons, or grandsons, or any other person gets lost (or car breaks down) in an area of Maine that has no cell phone reception, I want to be confident that the stand your ground won't be used to justify harmful actions (shooting someone) just because help was being sought by knocking on an unfamiliar door. I believe that should this legislation pass, it will contribute to more lives lost, specifically as a result of gun violence. I also believe that Maine is better than that. Please oppose this legislation.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration in regard to LD 486 in your efforts to ensure the safety of all people in Maine.

Sincerely,

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