

**Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,  
Representatives Beck, Cloutier, Doudera, Gramlich, Kuhn, Pugh, and Senator Carney,**

My name is Donna Stevens, a resident of Lewiston, I'm here to testify in **opposition** to LD 1109 "**An Act to Reduce Gun Violence Casualties in Maine by Prohibiting the Possession of Large-capacity Ammunition Feeding Devices.**

I'm a Domestic Violence & SA survivor and I credit legally purchasing and training with a handgun with saving my life and empowering me to leave that relationship.

My handgun was legally manufactured in the U.S. with a **STANDARD capacity of 15 rounds.** This legislation restricts me from owning my lifesaving defense tool in the State of Maine.

Banning magazines holding 10 or more rounds arbitrarily undermines Mainers' fundamental right to adequate self-defense, while ignoring practical realities and without meaningfully curbing crime. Expecting a person to modify an existing magazine holding more than 10 rounds to hold fewer is unreasonable, impractical, costly, and undermines the magazine's purpose.

Modification requires either technical know-how or paying a gunsmith to do it to each magazine owned. Not only does this burden lower income otherwise lawful gun owners without the know-how, but modification risks damaging the magazine's reliability, which is critical for self-defense, where jams or failures could be fatal. Many standard magazines holding 15 or 17 rounds for handguns/ 30 rounds for rifles, are factory-designed for higher capacity; altering them creates a product that may not feed ammo properly. Plus, the time and effort to modify, test, or replace parts add further burden. Criminals won't bother with this, leaving law-abiding owners at a self-defense disadvantage- and poorer- for no real gain. It's a punitive expectation that ignores practicality, safety and rights.

If time permitted, I could provide you a plethora of mainstream news examples of women attacked in their home by multiple assailants, all armed and yet prohibited from being so. Some of these women were in rural areas where help from law enforcement officers was a long time away- and used what you are attempting to define as "high capacity" to **SUFFICIENTLY** defend their homes, lives and children against multiple intruders during the invaluable **seconds that mattered** while law enforcement officers were **minutes to hours away**.

Magazine capacity restrictions arbitrarily limit how effectively a **LAWFUL** gun owning individual can defend themselves—10 rounds might not be enough especially against multiple attackers, where seconds matter and reloading could mean the difference between life and death.

A capacity limit imposes a disadvantage for self-defense on otherwise lawful gun owning people who need it most, all while doing nothing to stop people already breaking the law **because louder for those in the back**, "criminals don't obey laws". If they did, there would be no rape, human trafficking, murder, burglary, arson, etc. and no need for jails/prisons.

Plus, modern firearms, including handguns like the Glock 17 and Ruger 9mm, both popular self-defense pistols, come standard with 15 and 17-round magazines. Banning magazines that hold sufficient ammunition meant to safely neutralize threats will penalize owners for using what's practical and widely available, by labeling them with an emotionally charged buzzword "high capacity". Proponents of the legislation say "high-capacity" when speaking to the public and news cameras, yet this legislation itself uses "large-capacity" because "high-capacity" is not a recognized legal definition.

The argument isn't about hunting or sport—it's about giving people a fighting chance when their life is on the line.

There's no historical legitimacy to the claim that the Founding Fathers could not have foreseen the "scary black semi-auto rifles" of today that discharge one bullet, per trigger pull, nor that they could foresee a firearm holding "dozens of rounds".

It's more truthful to say it's no more than an opinion or claim formed out of ignorance of history and lack of knowledge about the very firearms themselves.

For example, the 1781 Chelembrom Magazine Repeating Flintlock predated the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment by 10 years, carried 20 rounds, and as noted by the Royal Collection Trust in the UK- at least one was acquired by King George III himself.

Another is the 1779 Girandoni Repeating Air Rifle, a smokeless, breech-loaded, magazine-fed, comparatively quiet gun which used air reservoirs instead of gunpowder to fire up to 22 rounds per minute.

Alternatively, I can point out the logical fallacy and inconsistency in arguing that citizens don't need the same tools that our local and state police officers, consider essential for their self-defense. Police officers often carry magazines with more than 10 rounds. If that capacity is necessary to ensure law enforcement's self-defense, why shouldn't I have the same capability for self-defense of myself and my family?

This legislation punishes law-abiding and responsible gun owners without addressing the ROOT causes of gun violence, which often involve illegal firearms, accessories and unlawful possession. When our police officers try to enforce our gun laws by arresting offenders on violations, the offenders are released the same day, after posting a couple hundred dollars bail. This example is from several recent out of state offenders with FELONY gun convictions and yet bail was still a couple hundred dollars.

Not only does this legislation seek to remove sufficient ability to defend ourselves, our police officers aren't even given the support THEY need against criminals who we know will not obey these laws because they have SHOWN us they are NOT obeying laws and when arrested, they are released as though there was a simple misunderstanding and not a prohibited person with a FELONY gun conviction arrested in possession of guns. It's like slapping police officers in the face. Do you REALLY need to wonder WHY there's a shortage of officers? Not if you're being honest with yourself, you don't.

The Constitution's 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment protects the right to bear arms, and while it doesn't specify magazine sizes, the principle is about allowing citizens to defend themselves effectively.

I do not have the technical know-how nor the financial ability to pay someone who does know how to modify my standard capacity magazines to fall into compliance. Nor do I have the physical or financial ability to move out of Maine to remain in compliance. The requirements outlined in this legislation for me to become compliant are tantamount to disarming me, thus depriving me of my 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Right to Keep and Bear Arms and stripping me of my ability to defend myself.

Lawmakers should prioritize focusing on enforcing existing laws against actual threats, not symbolic, ineffective restrictions that sound good but leave the vulnerable less safe.

The Second Amendment protects the individual's ability to bear arms for many reasons, among those for their own protection, a right affirmed by the Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller*

(2008). While SCOTUS hasn't specifically addressed magazine capacity in handguns and rifles, one could reasonably and rightfully argue that restricting magazine size infringes on the effectiveness of that right.

I close with gratitude for your time listening and in hopes you'll protect law abiding Maine peoples' right to protect themselves by rejecting this legislation.

Regards,

Donna Stevens

March 21, 2025