

David Souers
Friendship
LD 1109

LD 1109: An Act to Reduce Gun Violence Casualties in Maine by Prohibiting the Possession of Large-capacity Ammunition Feeding Devices

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, Members of the committee, I am David Souers. I live in Friendship, Maine. I am a retired healthcare facility architect from a family that owned, collected and used firearms as a hobby, and for recreation, target practice, hunting and protecting our agriculture from certain wildlife, in compliance with a variety of laws protecting ourselves and others for the types of firearms, locations and use.

I am testifying in favor of this bill to reduce gun violence casualties in Maine by prohibiting the possession of large capacity magazines and ammunition feeding devices for the following reasons:

1.This bill classifies the possession of a large capacity ammunition feeding device that holds more than 10 rounds of ammunition as a Class D misdemeanor. A person is guilty of this offense if they knowingly manufacture, import, purchase, possess, sell, offer, or transfer ownership of these devices within the state of Maine.

2.Considering the Second Amendment entitles an individual to bear arms for self defense, it only takes one round to severely injure or kill someone who threatens your life at a distance close enough to know your life is in eminent danger. Maine's hunting license requirements allow up to five rounds. Most hunting involves more significant distances with many rifles using scopes. Most hunting is in fact an offensive sport, not defensive. But if you had to defend yourself from a moose charge, you have a limited number of rounds. LD 1109 allows for ten rounds per clip, with the ability to have additional 10 round clips. The intent of self defense is not to start domestic wars.

3.Shootings with the greatest number of casualties often involve firearms that accept large capacity magazines (LCMs). LCMs allow an individual to fire a large number of rounds without taking time to reload, limiting the chance for people to get to safety and/or others to intervene. By prohibiting LCMs, mass shootings may be harder to perpetrate and result in fewer casualties.

4.This Bill will:

a.Prohibits purchase and possession (as well as other transfers) of ammunition feeding devices that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition.

b.It allows 180 days to comply with the law, which may be done by:

i.Permanently modifying the device so it cannot hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition;

ii.Surrendering the device(s) to the appropriate law enforcement agency; or

iii.Transferring or selling the device(s) to an FFL (federally licensed firearm dealer) outside of Maine that is lawfully entitled to possess such devices.

iv.Violating this law constitutes a Class D misdemeanor and carries a penalty of up to 364 days in jail and a fine of up to \$2,000.

v.Includes exemptions for active-duty military personnel and state/federal law enforcement officers.

c.This Bill will not:

i.Apply to ammunition feeding devices that are made or sold exclusively for use with firearms classified as curios, relics, or antiques.

ii.Affect FFLs transporting these devices through the state for sale or transfer to exempted entities or persons authorized to lawfully possess such devices out of state.

iii.Prohibit the temporary transport and use of ammunition feeding devices by persons in organized shooting competitions.

5.States with magazine capacity limits experience mass shootings at half the rate compared to states without such restrictions.

6.The use of LCMs holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition significantly increases the lethality of mass shooting incidents.

7.By allowing perpetrators to fire multiple rounds in rapid succession without reloading, LCMs intensify attacks, reducing opportunities for victims to escape or for law enforcement and bystanders to intervene.

8.Research demonstrates that state laws prohibiting LCMs are associated with reductions in gun violence fatalities and injuries. To date, 14 states, including VT, NY, MA, RI, NJ, CT, MD, DE (partial ban at 17 round capacity limit), DC, IL, CO, HI, CA, OR, and WA have enacted laws prohibiting LCMs.

The increasing size of LCMs combined with rapid fire firearms is clearly intended to promote sudden, overwhelming and severe bodily harm rather than self defense. We have no evidence that these large capacity rapid firearms are ever used for legal self defense. We have clear evidence that law enforcement are less able to defend and overcome situations where criminals and mass shooters use of these LCMs and rapid firearms.

I advocate that this LD 1109 ought to pass.