

Danielle Chabot  
WINTHROP  
LD 953

Thank you to Senator Rachel Talbot Ross, Representative William D. Pluecker and the rest of the Maine Judiciary Committee for hearing this bill. My name is Danielle Chabot, from Winthrop ME and I am testifying in opposition to LD 953 - An Act to Change the Definition of "Machine Gun" in the Maine Criminal Code. On October 25, 2023 my husband (retired Air Force) and I were bowling with our friends at Just-In-Time recreation in Lewiston, Maine, just as we had many times before as part of our Wednesday night bowling league. This night of course was different because about a half hour into our first game, Robert Card would enter the bowling alley and change our lives forever. I was roughly 20-25 feet away from him as he shot my friends and fellow bowlers. I was spared when his gun jammed (I could see the light of his laser sight in our direction) and 2 men we had gone to high school with attempted to tackle him, giving their lives in an attempt to stop the carnage. My husband and I made it out alive that night but our lives are forever altered. I am acutely aware of the fact that the only thing that could have prevented Card entering that bowling alley that evening would have been for him to be getting the mental health help that he so desperately needed. I'm also acutely aware that once he did enter the bowling alley, the only thing that could have stopped him would have been one of us having a weapon on us. I do not take this lightly, I have taken shooting lessons, I have taken gun safety lessons, I have my concealed carry permit. I was not carrying because I am a responsible gun owner and I was having a beer that night with my friends. I would never make that choice again. I would always choose to carry and have the ability to at least attempt to protect my life and the lives of those I love. I realize that these bills that aim to enforce stricter gun laws are being done out of pure emotion. I am begging you to step back and look at this more logically. Changing the definition of a machine gun, banning certain guns, reducing the magazine capacity allowed - none of these things would have stopped Robert Card from coming in and killing my friends. Criminals cannot be stopped by laws. We need to address the mental health issues at hand and stop creating new laws that simply reduce the rights of law abiding citizens. I thank you for your time today.