

Anne M. Gallaudet
Scarborough, Maine

April 16, 2025

Re: LD 1299, An Act to Prohibit the Unsecured Storage of Handguns in Motor Vehicles

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.

I appreciate this opportunity to address you on this important matter. My name is Anne Gallaudet. I am a resident of Scarborough, Maine. I am writing in support of LD 1299.

This bill requires safe storage of unattended handguns in motor vehicles. In other words, this bill prohibits a person from intentionally or knowingly storing a handgun in an unoccupied motor vehicle unless the handgun is stored out of plain view in a locked hard-sided container and the motor vehicle, including the trunk, is locked. There are stated exceptions for persons such as law enforcement officers and gun owners engaged in lawful hunting activities. Penalties for violation of LD 1299 are civil, not criminal.

Mandated handgun security in motor vehicles is like mandated car seat belt usage. Learning a new habit is not that difficult for responsible persons who value safety. Overtime it becomes natural and benefits all.

SAFELY SECURED HANDGUNS STOP THIEVES FROM STEALING HANDGUNS

Unattended visible handguns in locked cars are red meat for thieves. The stolen handguns are increasingly showing up in the hands of people who cannot legally buy them. No one wants handguns stolen, never mind subsequently used by someone who could not legally obtain a handgun in the commitment of a crime. This assertion is based on national statistics showing the growth in gun thefts from unoccupied cars. Everytown Research shows that [a decade ago a quarter of gun thefts were from cars. In 2022, over half were. Further, the rate](https://everytownresearch.org/report/gun-thefts-from-cars-the-largest-source-of-stolen-guns-2/) of gun thefts from cars has tripled from what it was a decade ago. <https://everytownresearch.org/report/gun-thefts-from-cars-the-largest-source-of-stolen-guns-2/>

SAFELY SECURED HANDGUNS IN MOTOR VEHICLES ENSURE NO UNINTENTIONAL DEATH, INJURIES OR DAMAGE

Visible unsecured handguns (e.g. unlocked and loaded) in unsecured vehicles can be easily misfired or misused accidentally or unintentionally by others, including by children and pets. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7250a1.htm>

SECURING THE HANDGUN IN A MOTOR VEHICLE ONLY ENHANCES SAFETY *IF* DONE CORRECTLY

Merely locking the car doors, trunk, car console or glove compartment is not enough to guarantee security because they can easily be pried open. See <https://www.justice.gov/media/1337981/dl?inline#:~:text=Store%20unloaded%20firearms%20in%20a%20locked%20gun%20safe%20or%20other,to%20tampering%20by%20an%20adult.&text=Use%20a%20locked%20gun%20safe,or%20both%2C%20to%20prevent%20removal>

Safe handgun storage laws do not run afoul of the Second Amendment. They are a constitutionally sanctioned way to protect us all from preventable accidents and crime.

Thank you for considering my appeal. I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1299.

Anne Gallaudet,
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