

Dane Courtois
Hiram
LD 208

To the Honorable Members of the Maine Judiciary Committee,

My name is Dane Courtois, and I am a resident of Hiram. I am writing to express my strong support for LD 208, An Act to Eliminate the 72-hour Waiting Period on Firearm Purchases. This bill is a critical step toward restoring the full exercise of Second Amendment rights for law-abiding Maine citizens while addressing practical concerns that the current waiting period imposes.

The 72-hour waiting period, enacted under LD 2238, creates an unnecessary burden on responsible gun owners without clear evidence of its effectiveness in achieving its intended goals. While proponents argue it serves as a "cooling-off" period to prevent impulsive acts, studies on waiting periods show mixed results, and Maine's existing background check system already ensures that only eligible individuals can purchase firearms. Delaying the exercise of a constitutional right for three days does not address the root causes of violence or mental health crises, which require more comprehensive solutions like improved access to mental health services.

For many Mainers, the waiting period poses significant practical challenges. For example, individuals in rural areas may need to make multiple trips to a firearms dealer, incurring time and travel costs that disproportionately affect working families or those with limited resources. Additionally, the delay can hinder those who urgently need a firearm for self-defense, such as victims of domestic violence or stalking, who may have passed a background check but are forced to wait in potentially dangerous situations. The right to self-defense is immediate, and LD 208 ensures that law-abiding citizens are not arbitrarily delayed in protecting themselves and their loved ones.

Furthermore, the waiting period risks undermining Maine's outdoor heritage and economy. Hunters, especially those visiting from out of state, may face logistical barriers when purchasing firearms for time-sensitive trips, potentially driving business to neighboring states. Small businesses, like local gun shops, could also suffer from reduced sales due to this inconvenience.

The Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear arms, and recent federal court rulings, including a February 2025 injunction against Maine's waiting period, affirm that such blanket delays lack historical precedent and may infringe on constitutional protections. LD 208 aligns with these principles by removing an arbitrary restriction while maintaining robust safeguards like background checks.

I urge the Committee to support LD 208 to eliminate the 72-hour waiting period, thereby upholding the rights of Maine's citizens, supporting our state's economy, and focusing on more effective solutions to public safety. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Dane Courtois