

David Souers
Friendship
LD 1120

LD 1120 - An Act to Promote the Secure Storage of Firearms

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 LD 1120 for the following reasons;

1. Firearms are intended under all advocacy for the purpose of self defense which involves many responsibilities including proper training, preparation, maintenance, condition, location and storage for the firearms. I am sure that a well trained military veteran or law enforcement officer would be able to explain this.

a. Firearms should not be left lying around. My niece described a situation where her middle school age daughter went to a girl friend's house in her neighborhood to visit with a few girls and boys in a family playroom. Several firearms were leaning up against the walls and on tables. The boys proceeded to handle and play act with them. My niece's daughter was uncomfortable because she experiences regular "active shooter drills" in her school. Recently before the playroom incident, a false alarm, not an "active shooter drill" occurred in her school. The daughter called my niece and reported her fear that "this is the real thing". After a traumatic wait under cover, the school reported that it had been a false alarm. Children today are traumatized regularly by incidents like this which can lead to varying responses from fearing guns to seeing them as toys.

b. Firearms cannot be effectively, safely and reliably used for defense if they are not kept in a secure reliable location in a condition to be used without mishandling by others.

2. Children, family or friend visitors, anyone who is not properly trained, prepared and knowledgeable about using your particular firearms should not be handling them with your (the owner's) supervision.

a. The probability for accidents and harm to the unfamiliar is great for both the untrained, the spectators and the firearm owner.

b. My father, more than 60 years ago, kept his firearms in a locked gun rack.

3. Secure storage also prevents firearm theft, use of firearms in the home against the home and firearm owner by visitors or strangers, misplacement of firearms and other possible ways for firearms to be misused, abused that could lead to bodily harm because they were out where anyone could use them criminally, dangerously, recklessly or carelessly.

4. Secure storage is simply good and safe practice.

I advocate that LD 1120 ought to pass.