

Amanda Scarpone
Poland
LD 1062

Amanda Scarpone
Poland, Maine
April 15, 2025

To Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Amanda Scarpone, I am a resident of Poland, Maine, and I am a public health professional who works in the non-profit and philanthropy field. I am also a member of the Maine Public Health Association.

I am writing to you today in opposition to LD 1062, An Act to Eliminate Background Checks for Private Sales of Firearms. As a public health professional, I believe in the need for gun safety measures to protect us all. Maine has a strong culture of responsible gun ownership, but this does not free us from the risk and devastation of gun violence. This was unfortunately made clear in the tragic mass shooting in Lewiston, ME—a tragedy that has irrevocably altered many lives and our community as a whole.

There are clear ways that we can decrease the risk of gun violence in Maine, and that includes expanded background checks, including for private sales, which our current legislation provides. Background checks for private sales are a key method of keeping guns out of the hands of irresponsible and reckless potential gun owners, including those who have previously committed violent offenses, drug traffickers, and domestic abusers. Statistics show that nearly 80% of firearms acquired for criminal activity come through unlicensed sellers who are not required to perform background checks. Background checks are proven to be simple and convenient for law-abiding and responsible gun owners, and would decrease the chance of dangerous firearms getting in the hands of the wrong people who put Mainers at risk. Maine has the 38th highest gun death rate in the US, and gun deaths in Maine have increased 50% from 2014-2023. We can do more to improve those grim statistics and to protect Mainers from gun death. Current background check regulations do just that, and for that reason, I urge you to oppose LD 1062 which would repeal these safety regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee.

Thank you,
Amanda Scarpone