



**Maine Medical
Association**



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AND**

THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

In Support Of

LD 1104 - An Act to Limit the Liability of Persons Who Provide Firearm Hold Agreements; and LD 1174 - An Act to Allow Gun Shops to Hold Firearms for Veterans of the United States Armed Forces and First Responders; LD 1120 - An Act to Promote the Secure Storage of Firearms; and LD 1299 An Act to Prohibit the Unsecured Storage of Handguns in Motor Vehicles

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
Room 438, State House, Augusta, Maine
Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Good Afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Anne Sedlack, and I am the Director of Advocacy at the Maine Medical Association. I am submitting this testimony in Support of LD 1104 - An Act to Limit the Liability of Persons Who Provide Firearm Hold Agreements, LD 1174 - An Act to Allow Gun Shops to Hold Firearms for Veterans of the United States Armed Forces and First Responders, LD 1120 - An Act to Promote the Secure Storage of Firearms, and LD 1299 An Act to Prohibit the Unsecured Storage of Handguns in Motor Vehicles on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

We have joined together to advocate with one voice. We have all determined that it is important to testify in support of LD 1104, LD 1174, LD 1120, and LD 1299.

MMA and MOA have chosen gun safety reform as a priority issue for our Associations because we cannot continue to ignore one of America's most serious public health crises. Deaths by firearms have increased significantly in the last few years, including homicide, suicide, and accidents. We, the physician caregivers for more than a million Mainers, stand up to end this and advocate through the protection of existing state law and the passage of sensible firearm safety laws in Maine. Maine's physicians are dedicated to our communities' health and well-being. We take our role in advancing public health measures seriously. We have no choice because we are on the front lines of caring for patients affected by gun-related injuries every day.

LD 1174 and LD 1104 provide a compassionate, voluntary solution to a legitimate public health crisis, the alarmingly high rates of firearm suicides among both veterans and first responders. As doctors, we regularly interact with patients in the midst of mental health crises, and we know better than almost anyone how lethal access to firearms can be in a moment of mental crisis. The practice of temporarily removing firearms from individuals in crisis, especially with their consent in a respectful manner, is a powerful tool to prevent suicides.

LD 1174 would allow licensed gun shops to enter into formal "firearm hold agreements" with veterans and first responders who voluntarily wish to store their firearms for safekeeping. By codifying this option and protecting participating gun shops from liability when acting in good faith, the bill creates a clear, safe pathway for individuals to reduce immediate risk without permanently relinquishing their firearms. LD 1104 further complements LD 1174 by offering commonsense liability protections to those who voluntarily agree to hold firearms under a firearm hold agreement. Together, these two bills remove key obstacles to safe firearm storage, an essential part of preventing suicide, by giving people the confidence and clarity they need to step in and help. Encouraging temporary safekeeping during times of crisis can save lives and strengthen a culture of care and responsibility within our communities.

We also support LD 1120 and LD 1299. Maine currently has no law requiring the secure storage of firearms, aside from a law penalizing those who allow young children to access firearms without parental permission, but this law is not enough. These two bills offer common-sense, lifesaving policies that address the significant public health concern of unsecured firearms in homes and vehicles.

LD 1120 lays out rules to help keep guns out of the hands of kids and people who shouldn't have them, something that can go a long way in preventing accidental shootings, suicides, and domestic violence. It also makes sure gun dealers give buyers clear warnings about the risks that come with owning a firearm. LD 1299 tackles the growing problem of handguns being stolen from unattended vehicles, which are often later used in crimes. In fact, one study has found that firearms that are stolen are nine times more likely to be used in a crime than guns purchased legally.¹ LD 1129 would help address this problem by requiring that guns be locked up and kept out of sight while being stored in a vehicle. By doing this, the bill aims to cut down on gun theft and help keep our communities safer.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physicians and public health community. We hope you will support these bills.

Best,

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¹ Robinson, S.L., McCort, C.D., Smirniotis, C. et al. Purchaser, firearm, and retailer characteristics associated with crime gun recovery: a longitudinal analysis of firearms sold in California from 1996 to 2021. *Inj. Epidemiol.* 11, 8 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-024-00491-8>