



GUN OWNERS OF MAINE

DEFENDING GUN RIGHTS

In Regard to:

LD 1743: An Act to Allow Municipalities to Prohibit Firearms Within Their Municipal Buildings and Voting Places and at Their Municipal Public Proceedings

We submit this testimony in strong opposition and would urge a vote of OUGHT NOT TO PASS.

It violates Maine's preemption law, which prohibits individual cities and towns from making their own gun laws. There are nearly 500 municipalities in Maine. We have our preemption law for a very good reason: it would be horribly unreasonable and unfair to Maine people to create a confusing and ever-changing patchwork of gun laws across the state. LD 1743 would start chipping away at preemption, setting a dangerous precedent.

Unless TSA-style checkpoints with metal detectors and pat-downs are implemented, the idea of making a gun-free zone is nothing but a fantasy that gives people a false sense of security. There is no sign so magical and so powerful that it will stop an evil or deranged person from harming others. The only people inclined to comply with a no-guns policy are those who pose no threat in the first place. **To those intent on causing harm, a no guns allowed sign only serves to inform them that they are unlikely to encounter effective resistance, ultimately putting innocent people at greater risk of harm.**

There are already laws in place that address the concerns raised by supporters of this bill. These laws give local officials the tools necessary to deal with problems should they arise:

- A. Maine's Title 17-A prohibits criminal threatening.
- B. Maine's Title 25 prohibits the threatening display of a firearm.
- C. Maine's Title 21-A prohibits interference with the free passage of individuals at the voting place.
- D. Title 18 of the US Code contains a VERY strong prohibition against intimidation of voters.

In what way does disarming law-abiding citizens make a place safer from criminal activity? Most "mass shootings" take place in gun-free zones. There is a reason for that: the majority of mass shootings are stopped by another person with a gun, whether it be a member of law enforcement or an armed citizen – and criminals prefer to choose places where their victims are helpless and disarmed. There is no evidence that creating a gun-free zone at any location will improve the safety of that location. Has Maine had a problem with crimes taking place at voting places? Will this bill do anything to prevent crime at a location that is a gun-free zone?

Maine has a very long tradition of protecting the right to self-defense. Making municipal buildings and voting places gun-free zones goes against this long tradition. **A person should not have to give up their**

constitutional rights simply because they choose to vote, need to register their car, or take their garbage to the Transfer Station.

We encourage you to vote in opposition to LD 1743:

- It is vague and unenforceable
- It will not make municipal buildings or voting places safer
- It establishes a patchwork of gun-free zones that is nearly impossible to navigate
- It violates the rights of Maine Residents to be secure in the defense of their own person.

On behalf of the Gun Owners of Maine Board of Directors,

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