

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel; (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-2887
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

5/1/2025

Senator Carney, Chair
Representative Kuhn, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 1379 – *An Act to Require Public Health Warnings to Be Posted and Provided by Firearm Dealers and Gunsmiths*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to provide information in opposition to LD 1379, *An Act to Require Public Health Warnings to Be Posted and Provided by Firearm Dealers and Gunsmiths*.

Firearm-related violence and injury are significant public health concerns. The proposed bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to develop standardized public health warnings to be displayed by firearms dealers and gunsmiths. It also requires the Department to enforce compliance with this requirement. There is value in raising awareness of risk-reduction strategies, such as secure storage of firearms, and firearm retailers can be important partners in reducing firearm injuries. However, it is unclear if this strategy will impact the behavior of firearm owners. This bill will require significant financial investment as the Maine CDC does not currently conduct compliance activities with firearms dealers and gunsmiths.

Evidence-based interventions exist for engaging firearm retailers in injury prevention. These programs rely on voluntary engagement and participation as well as support for retailers to provide active interventions to reduce risk, such as providing secure storage equipment (e.g. cable locks or lock boxes) and off-site storage of firearms. Additionally, a mandatory requirement that relies on compliance checks and potential fines might decrease the willingness of firearm retailers to partner with the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention (OIVP) on other programming.

The current OIVP has no infrastructure to inspect all firearm retailers and ensure compliance, rulemaking and additional staff resources are needed to ensure the requirements of the bill are carried out. The framework necessary for operationalizing this legislation is estimated to take up to a year to establish. For context, Maine law does not require firearms dealers or gunsmiths to obtain a state license; they must register federally with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. A recent search of Maine licensees came up with just over 550. Our office used the assumption that each license holder would be visited in person once every biennium and allowed to provide attestation by mail on the off year to confirm compliance with

the law, but this cadence is not explicitly spelled out in the bill. Additionally, on-site inspections would need to be performed more frequently in the event of repeated complaints.

Another consideration is that [Maine law](#) (15 MRS §455-A) currently requires gun shows and any commercial retail sales outlet that sells firearms to conspicuously post a sign with a warning about not leaving firearms or ammunition within easy access of a child. Said law also imposes a civil forfeiture of not more than \$200 for any compliance failure. This proposed bill proposes a fine of \$500, so these similar bills are incongruent in penalties for failure to comply.

We support increased collaboration between Maine CDC and firearms dealers and gunsmiths, but we would encourage consideration of alternative programming to maximize any investment made. While we appreciate the spirit of this bill, it is unclear if this will achieve the desired outcomes.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Puthiery Va.", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Puthiery Va, DO

Director

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Maine Department of Health and Human Services