

Margaret Duhamel
Woolwich
LD 1378

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the committee. My name is Peg Duhamel, and I live in Woolwich. I respectfully testify in support of LD 1378: An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act.

I strongly support an ERPO in Maine. I feel that it is a better law than the yellow flag law we currently have. The family/household members know the person in question and are much better equipped to evaluate a potential threat than does a police officer who has no prior knowledge of the person or their history. As a retired MD, I know how difficult it can be to get a mental health evaluation done in a timely way. I know how traumatizing it can be for someone having a mental health crisis to be incarcerated, which can happen with our current law. I think the red flag law, which is in effect in 21 other states, and which is more streamlined, is more likely to be effective than our current law. Even if it is more effective in only one case, that will have been worth it.

When I was collecting signatures for the petition to get this initiative on the ballot, it was not difficult at all to get the signatures. If pro-gun advocates took the time to listen to what I had to say, or read the material, they very frequently agreed and would sign. I had way more yes's than no's. This needs to go to the people to be voted on. Thank you for your consideration.