

Barbara Arsenault
Mexico, Maine
LD 1378

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

This is the third time I have testified for such legislation. I testify not because I am a great communicator but it is important that you hear from someone like me who lives in a rural area, who lives in a firearm owning home and grew up in a hunting home where Thanksgiving didn't start until the "guys" came back from hunting. There are many people like me and unfortunately, even my own State Senator Joe Martin, referred to those of us who are for sensible gun legislation as anti gun, out of state radicals. I could not be further from the sort. After the Uvalde shooting I was walking in my neighborhood and a big burly guy saw my "We can end gun violence" t shirt. He leaned out of his truck and yelled "Hey, I like your t shirt". When I told that to Congressman Golden's office they said, "We didn't expect you to say that!"

I often testify with our veterans in mind. When I testified in person about the 72 hour wait period I passed out the statistics of firearm suicide with Maine veterans. Extreme Risk Protection Orders have been proven to reduce suicide and as Maine has an issue with veteran suicide this can only help with saving lives.

When I first testified for an Extreme Risk Protection Order Act in 2019 there was an out state resident who testified for the passage of the bill. He was a well dressed teenager waiting patiently for his turn. He was a Parkland High School graduate from Florida and the year before 17 of his classmates were gunned down. He took the time and money to come to Maine to help prevent such a tragedy from happening again. Let's listen to our young people. Thank you for your time.