

Elizabeth Biermann
Cape Elizabeth
LD 1378

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

I believe that The Safe Schools Safe Communities initiative will save lives and help keep our kids, families, and communities safe. Firearms are now the leading cause of death for American children and teens. Other states have used these laws to disarm people who threatened school shootings and it's important for Maine to do what it can to protect our own children and teens in Maine. Safe communities are a critical foundation for what people want to live in a community.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders will allow both families and law enforcement to petition the court when a loved one is in crisis- and this critical because family members are often the first to know when a loved one is in crisis and potentially poses a threat to themselves or others. Importantly, Maine's current law is not an Extreme Risk Protection Order law – it is the only law of its kind in the nation and it disempowers family members from getting help and preventing tragedies. Critically, it failed to prevent the tragedy in Lewiston and so better laws are needed. I support this legislation as a reasonable but powerful tool to keep Mainers safe.

We must all come together to support this common sense proposal to close the loopholes in our current laws that have led to tragic loss of life and devastated families and communities.

Thank you.