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Testimony of Representative Vicki Doudera supporting
**LD 60, An Act to Require a 72-hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a
Firearm**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Good afternoon Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Vicki Doudera and I represent House District 41, which includes Camden and Rockport. I am here today in support of **LD 60, An Act to Require a 72-hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a Firearm.**

Waiting period laws require gun buyers to wait a specified period—between three and 14 days, depending on the state—before completing a purchase. These policies create a buffer of time for a person in suicidal crisis, a cooling-off period that can be the difference between life and death.

The bill before you requires a waiting period of 72 hours. I think all of us can agree that 72 hours is not a long period of time. How then would a bill with a short waiting period even help?

One answer to that questions lies in our state's high rate of suicide – 12th highest in the country. More than 85 percent of Maine's firearm deaths in 2020 were suicides. Let's face it: if you are struggling with suicidal thoughts, the way you choose to end your life matters. Because many times a person who attempts suicide is rescued and never goes on to attempt suicide again.

But that isn't the case if a firearm is involved.

90% of firearm suicide attempts end in death, while only 4% of all other attempts end in death. If we can keep a suicidal person from accessing lethal means for 72 hours, we may save a life. And not just a life – but years of anguish and trauma for a family and a community, all of which are ripple effects when someone takes their life.

A short waiting period to purchase a gun is not a hardship but a possible lifeline.

Thank you.