

4/3/23 TESTIMONY FOR LD 60 – REQUIRING 72-HOUR WAITING PERIOD

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, I am Carol Selsberg, an 85-year-old grandmother from Eliot, Maine to speak on behalf of LD 60

Who needs a gun in a hurry? The American Academy of Pediatrics-67,000 doctors—confirm that guns are the suicide weapon choice. The 9 states with at least 72-hour waiting periods boast 51% fewer suicides and a 17% decrease in gun homicides. In 2023, Maine was 12th out of 50 for highest suicide rates (World Population Review). All evidence confirms this life-ending act is often impulsive. Over 75% of gun and non-gunowners support **longer** waiting periods (Gallup).

In 2022, 234 Maine'rs killed themselves. Suicide for those 10-35 was the 2nd leading cause of death (Kennebec Journal-8/26/22). On 3/20/23, quoting Kennebec Journal: "In all but nine states, most gun deaths are self-inflicted. The highest proportion is in Maine where 89% of gun deaths are suicides." Fifty-seven percent of ALL gun deaths nationally are suicides - 117,000 out of 206,000 in the past 5 years (The Center for Disease Control and Prevention).

Maine veterans' suicide rates are significantly higher than the national average which is also very high (Dept. for Veteran's Affairs). The U.S Defense Dept. Committee on Suicide Prevention recommends a 7-day waiting period because of this horrific data. A 3/10/22 Fact Sheet from the Center for American Progress reveals that in 2019, nearly 72% of the 4,332 suicides of current or former military members used a gun. The FBI reports a gun is used in domestic partner violence more than any other weapon so a cooling off time for someone who is having an angry meltdown or is a serial or momentary abuser can certainly save lives. A waiting period also gives the at-risk partner and children an opportunity to find safety elsewhere.

Again, I have to ask: **Who needs a gun in a hurry?**

Thank you for using your prime position to save lives with a lot more than thoughts and prayers.