

**Peggy McGehee  
Falmouth, Maine**

Good afternoon, Chairs Beebe-Center and Salisbury and Members of the Committee:

I am Peggy McGehee, a resident of the Town of Falmouth. I speak in support of the L.D. 60 waiting period, as a mother and grandmother in a gun-owning, military family. Our son is a U.S. Marine captain who has served active duty in Iraq. My daughter's son, my grandson, lives in rural Maine and is learning to shoot and hunt. We, and all the law-abiding and responsible gun owners here today, lose nothing if this bill, and all of today's gun safety bills, pass. Our gun ownership will not be curtailed in any way. And waiting 3 days to get a gun is nothing compared to the many lives this bill will save.

I would to talk about just one number-- 62. At least 62 Mainers, and it could be many more, will be saved from suicide, not just gun suicide, but any kind of suicide, if you pass this bill. This is a conservative estimate based on comparing 2020 data in states that have no waiting periods to states that have waiting periods, whether a pre-purchase licensing period, or like this bill, a post-purchase waiting period.

Here is the comparison: States with no licensing or waiting period, like Wyoming, Alabama, West Virginia, Kentucky, Louisiana and Georgia, have high gun suicide percentages and high suicide rates: 73%, 67%, 65%, 65%, 63%, and total suicides per 100,000 people are: 20, 16, 18, 17, 14 and 14.<sup>1</sup> Maine's is 56% and 16. In comparison, States with either a licensing or post-purchase waiting period have low gun suicide percentages and low total suicide rates: like Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut and California: 20%, 20%, 22%, 25%, 30% and 36%. And total suicides per 100,000 people of: 8, 8, 10, 8, 9 and 10.<sup>2</sup>

If you pass this bill it is reasonable to assume you will reduce Maine's 56% gun suicide percentage rate to 30% and its total number of suicides from 16.4 per 100,000 to 12. That would mean each year you will have saved 62 lives, and spared at least 62 families from tragic loss.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

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<sup>1</sup> Wyoming (73% percentage of gun suicides: 20.6 total suicides per 100,000); Alabama (67%: 16); West Virginia (65%: 18.1); Kentucky (65%: 17.7); Louisiana (65%: 13.7); and Georgia (63%: 13.7). *Note:* When South Dakota repealed its two-day waiting period law in 2009, the next year it had a 7.6 percent increase in gun suicides. Its gun suicide percentage in 2020 was 54% and its total number of suicides per 100,000 was 21.

<sup>2</sup> The lowest percentage of gun suicides, and lowest rate of total suicides per 100,000, are those states that either have pre-purchase licensing or post-purchase waiting periods, or both, including: Massachusetts (20% percentage of gun suicides: 8.4 suicides per 100,000); New York (20%: 8.1); Rhode Island (22%: 10.1); New Jersey (25%: 8.3); Connecticut (30%: 9.3); and California (36%: 10).