

LD 60: An Act to Require a 72 Hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a Firearm

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

I am Ann Sawchuck and I live in Cumberland, Maine. I am a mother and grandmother and I dearly want Maine to be a safer state for my children and grandchildren. Consequently, I support LD 60, which imposes on licensed gun dealers a 72 hour waiting period between the purchase of a firearm and its delivery to the buyer, with some exceptions. I believe LD 60 will reduce the number of homicides and suicides by firearm.

Maine has the highest suicide rate in the country for youth between 10 and 25 years old. We also have a veteran suicide rate, at 42.1 per 100,000, which is higher than the national average of 31 per 100,000. States that have pre-purchase licensing, or post-purchase waiting period, laws have substantially lower firearm suicide rates than states without such laws.

In Maine, where no license is required to buy a firearm, this Bill's post purchase waiting period provides a critical time buffer to give an impulsive, angry or suicidal buyer 3 days to cool down.

With Maine having the sad distinction of the highest suicide rate in the country for youth between 10 and 25 years old, this Bill should be particularly effective in addressing impulsive youth suicide.

Maine can also make the sad claim to having one of the highest rates of veteran suicide by firearm in the country. The U.S. Defense Department Committee on Suicide Prevention and Response recently issued a report, recommending, among other suicide prevention measures, a gun purchase 7 day waiting period for purchases of guns on military bases to help protect military personnel and veterans. A 3 day waiting period will help Maine veterans fight this tragedy. Maine has recently committed to invest \$230 million to address statewide suicide prevention. Having a firearm waiting period of 72 hours will give a distressed gun buyer, or his or her loved ones, time to seek out State suicide prevention resources.

Please support LD 60 and help fellow Mainers avoid becoming part of the grim statistics making our State a leader in youth and veteran suicides. Thank you.