

A CALL TO ACTION TO MAINE'S FAITH COMMUNITIES  
SEEKING GUN SAFETY LAWS IN MAINE

All of us want the people of Maine, young and old, to be safe from gun violence. Yet, there is steady growth in death by guns in Maine. Most alarming, suicide by guns in Maine grew by 45% from 2012 to 2021. This is not what we want for ourselves, our veterans, our children, or our grandchildren.

Today in Maine, anyone can buy any gun, including semi-automatic weapons and large capacity magazines, in a private sale, without a permit, without safe gun use training, without a background check.

Maine is a source state for criminals who come here to buy guns that they can't buy in their own states that have universal background checks. The shooter last year in Canada who killed 22 people bought his guns in Maine. And there is little in the way of safeguards to protect Mainers from becoming the targets of such violence.

As people of faith, we affirm that life is sacred. We are called to love and protect one another, and to be peacemakers – shalom makers: wholeness of life and joy of wellbeing in heart, mind, body, and soul.

**We are encouraged and hopeful that the Maine legislature is considering gun safety measures in the spring of 2023.**

As people of faith, let us call for the 131<sup>st</sup> Maine State Legislature to pass these three common sense gun safety laws:

1. A bill to require criminal background checks of buyers of firearms for private sales, transfers or exchanges at gun shows or private sales, transfers or exchanges resulting from advertising or marketing subject to certain exceptions; **(L.D. 168)**
2. A 72 hour waiting period before a gun is delivered from a seller to a buyer; **(L.D. 60)**
3. A "red-flag" law so family or friends of a person threatening gun violence to themselves or others can get a gun-confiscation court order; **(no L.D. yet assigned)**

Delegates to the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Maine Conference UCC passed a resolution entitled *An Urgent Call for the Prevention of Gun Violence*. It resolved to “require universal background checks and safety courses for all sales of guns, including sales at gun shows and between private individuals.” The Social Action Committee of the Maine Conference endorses

these proposed laws, asking and praying that our churches and members will support these measures to keep our neighbors, ourselves, and our families safe.

Submitted by,

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On behalf of the Maine Conference UCC