

Good morning, Senator Beebe-Center, Rep. Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

My name is David Fitz. I live in Cumberland, Maine. I am a retired hand surgeon and plastic surgeon - I worked at the Maine Medical Center and Mercy Hospital having arrived as a surgery resident 43 years ago.

I am a firearm owner and hunter, and was at one time certified to be a hunter safety instructor. I participated in a successful moose hunt in the North Maine Woods last fall.

I am here today to oppose LD 551, An Act to "Strengthen" Maine Citizens' 2nd Amendment Rights By Allowing the Discharge of Firearms on Private Property that is within 500 Feet of School Property in Certain Circumstances.

This bill is actually a proposal to create a "stand your ground" law through a vague association with the safe zone around our schools.

The bill also has nothing to do with strengthening my 2nd Amendment rights, and I don't understand the phraseology.

Maine does not need a "stand your ground" law, unless we are prepared to see what has happened around the country: 2 girls getting in the wrong car; a boy going to the wrong house to pick up his siblings; 2 girls driving to the wrong house: all being shot.

This bill as written is vague and inappropriate, as it is in direct conflict with Maine's duty to retreat.

Around the country where such laws have been passed, homicide rates have increased and such laws have been used by criminals as a defense.

I refer you to a January 10, 2023 paper by the Rand Corporation. This is an updated accurate statistical analysis of "Effects of Stand-Your-Ground Laws on Violent Crime." It is a review article that critiques all studies and statistics over the last 24 years. Below is the reference:

<https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/stand-your-ground/violent-crime.html>

We do not need LD 551 in Maine, and I hope you will vote "Ought not to pass."

Thank you.