

Testimony in support of LD 2086 and LD 2119

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, Members of the Judiciary Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to speak briefly in support of LD 2086 and 2119.

I'm Mark Segar. My wife and I live in Freeport, after many years in Portland, and a lifetime of service to children, youth and families.

The amendment to current law about gun disposition that addresses conversion tools will make Maine safer, improve our statutes by recognizing current realities, and reduce the availability of automated weapons. The proposal to give individuals a way to protect themselves (and others) by voluntarily turning in weapons is straightforward, sensible, and a positive contribution to the effort to prevent tragic loss of life.

I have seen the terrible consequences when guns and suicidal impulses intersect. I have seen it too many times, as a teacher and school administrator, as director of a state commission on children and youth, as the neighbor of a victim who lived less than a block away.

As citizens, we look to our elected representatives, to govern in ways that promote public safety, support health and well-being, we look to you for leadership. To achieve what is possible through research, reflection, debate, and compromise. Step by thoughtful step. We thank you for doing this difficult, essential work.

But we also look to you, not just to do what's possible, but to say what's right. And what's right is to allow automated, high capacity weapons **only**, in the hands of law enforcement and the military. Weapons of murderous havoc, that have no place in civil society.

Maine must act. As our neighbors in Connecticut did after Sandy Hook. As our fellow citizens in Washington State did just this past year. To recognize, as does virtually the entire rest of the world, that there should be no private privilege to possess weapons of war. Not bazookas, not bombs, not bump stocks.

Somehow our country has turned the premise of the revolution upside down. Our founders thought in terms of community rights and individual

responsibilities. Opponents of sensible laws would have us believe that it should be the other way around. That individual rights must always be honored over those of the community when it comes to weapons of mass murder. That is not liberty, or justice. It is mayhem.

Individual **and** community.

Liberty **and** justice.

Freedom **and** responsibility.

Not just one or the other. It is possible, necessary to have both.

Thank you again for all you are doing to make Maine more safe, more just.  
Please continue. Please do more.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark W. Segar, Ed.D.

March 5, 2024