

Testimony in Favor of Background Checks and a real Extreme Risk Protection Order

(Rotundo/Mills, LD 2224) and 72 Hour Waiting Periods (Rotundo, LD 2238)

The Rev. Patricia Fox, 152 Common Rd., Union, ME 04862

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and committee members,

I am here today to testify in favor of background checks on all gun sales, 72 hour waiting periods and real extreme risk protection orders. My name is Patty Fox and I serve as the Associate Minister of the First Congregational Church of Camden, UCC. I live in Union, ME.

I am not only representing myself today, but also two senior high school student leaders from our church who could not be here to speak for themselves. Anna Weber, a 17 year old senior from Medomak High School writes the following "If you've lived in Maine for some time, you've likely heard someone say "not in Maine," or "that would never happen here." The idea that we are free from the terrors of school shootings or mass shootings in general seems like a dangerous game to play, and I resent the idea of waiting until something occurs again before taking a stance. I want my behaviors to be proactive, rather than reactive. This, accompanied with the fear that I could be among the first in Maine to experience a school shooting, is why I am asking you to be proactive now and pass LD 2224 and LD 2238. Background checks, 72 hour waiting periods and real extreme risk protection orders save lives. They could save my life and the lives of my friends. Please be proactive.

Jenna VanRyn, a senior at Camden Hills Regional High School, writes this: As a student, an athlete, and an active member of my community, I am afraid. I fear for my fellow classmates, peers, and others, and wonder if events like those which occurred in our neighboring town of Lewiston, may happen to us. Easy access to weapons has instilled worry and anxiety in young people like me. We must attend school with the uncertainty of returning home safely; a thing we should never have to consider. I fear that my younger sibling will have to deal with this issue in the future as well. I fear for her life. Gun violence in the United States is an issue we are all aware of, and we all have a responsibility to address it. Please pass LD 2224 and LD 2238 and make our communities safer.

Thank you.