

LDs 2224 and 2238

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Hillary Shende from Brunswick, and I am here to testify in favor of LDs 2224 and 2238.

As I said to this committee on Tuesday, the leading cause of death for children in this country is gun violence, so I am here testifying because I want you to pass laws to keep my children alive, and you have to ability to do so.

I'm so grateful to the legislators and the governor for bringing these particular bills forward. Requiring unlicensed sellers to perform background checks is one of the most important actions Maine can take to reduce gun violence, both here and in other places. I am particularly glad that if this bill becomes law, Maine will no longer be the easy "source state" it currently is for crime guns used across the the world. Passing this part of the bill alone will save countless lives.

I am also heartened that the governor wants to improve the the yellow flag law. I WOULD like to see it made into a red flag law. If we had had a red flag law in place before the Lewiston shooting, the family members of the shooter, who had been vocal about their concerns, could have gone straight to a judge to have the shooter's weapons removed. The current yellow flag law requires instead that law enforcement officers take the unstable, ARMED person into custody, which places those officers in a very dangerous situation. Not only that, but the

unstable person instantly loses ALL of his rights, not just potentially his 2nd Amendment ones for a period of time.

As for LD 2238, a 72 hour waiting period before acquisition of a gun allows time for stress hormones in the blood to come down before a tragedy takes place, whether it is suicidal intentionality in a depressed person, or unbridled anger in a young man who wants to take out his rage on my innocent kids in their school. Also, a waiting period is not a big ask. If I were a hunter, I'd be more than happy to plan my hunting trips around the waiting period if having that waiting period saved lives. The minor inconvenience is NOT as important as those lives. And most Mainers agree, even across all counties and all political stripes!

Strong gun laws significantly reduce gun deaths wherever they are implemented. Please protect us Mainers and pass them.
Thank you.