

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Dana Williams, and I live in Belfast. I am a member of The First Church in Belfast Gun Safety Work Group. This written testimony is in support of LD 2224.

The proposals in this bill are limited in their efforts to add a higher level of protection for Maine citizens, but they acknowledge the need for addressing greater gun safety legislation in our state. As a disabled veteran in his 70's, I have watched as military style weapons have become commonplace in the civilian population. I have seen this country go from a place in which children had no reason to fear that gun violence would be a part of their lives to a place in which gun violence has become commonplace. Parents in my generation sent their children off to school with no thought that their child might be murdered there. At the heart of this constant fear is the easy availability of guns that are more appropriate for our nation's armed forces. Gun violence has become endemic in our culture, and we cannot change that without changing how we think about guns and gun ownership. It is essential that we do this. Otherwise, our progeny will never have the hope of a life without the fear of becoming yet another victim.

I will spare you the redundancy of citing statistics underscoring the need for a change in our gun laws. I'm sure you will have more than adequate information about these during this process. More significant to me is the passage of LD 2224 because it poses no threat to hunters and other responsible gun enthusiasts, and it takes a small step toward making Maine a safer place in which to live.

Thank you for your consideration of my perspective regarding LD 2224. You hold the positions in our government that can help move Maine toward becoming a safer place for all of us. I urge you to support this legislation. Thank you.