

Testimony in support of LD 2224 and LD 2238 - March 7, 2024

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, Members of the Judiciary Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of this legislation. My name is Mark Segar, from Freeport.

I appreciate the work that Governor Mills, Senator Rotundo, and the sponsors of this legislation have done to bring forward these proposals for positive change in Maine.

They are impelled by hard truths about the risks to public safety in a state awash with weapons.

They are framed by understanding of the often impulsive aspects of human nature, and the need for society to provide a framework of community safety that protects innocent lives as well as preserving individual rights.

They are informed by compassion, by common sense, and by a determination to do better by the children and families of tomorrow than we have done by the heartbroken homes of those who suffered such terrible loss last fall.

I hope that you will consider strengthening these proposals by further clarifying and simplifying the extreme risk protection process to make it less challenging for police and for concerned family members in their efforts to save lives and support loved ones.

Many of us have been here before, standing with teenagers on the State House steps after one school shooting or another, standing on the lawn with Bates college students after being locked down in their dorms, uninjured but still wounded by the fears they had faced.

Today we stand and ask you to lead necessary change, so that the “long-standing traditions” to which so many advocates refer, will finally include some common sense limits, to reduce risk, to honor community rights, to foster freedom from fear.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark W. Segar, Ed.D.