

March 7, 2024

Testimony in Opposition to LD 2224

An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System

and

LD 2238

An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Nathan Gould; I am from Winterport. This testimony is submitted in opposition to LD 2224, "An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System" and LD 2238, "An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases."

Over the course of the 131st Legislature, a number of bills related to firearms have been proposed. This Committee saw a bill that sought to unduly punish firearms manufacturers¹. The Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety saw bills that would force background checks for firearms sales between private citizens and put a 72-hour waiting period on firearms purchases². Though these bills were eventually defeated, they show continual attempts to infringe upon the rights of Mainers.

1 LD 1696

2 LD 168, LD 60

Contrast that to another bill that the Criminal Justice and Public Safety and the Education and Cultural Affairs Committees saw, prohibiting the government from keeping a registry of firearms owners, allowing schools and teachers to defend themselves and their students, and removing unnecessary restrictions on concealed carry permit holders³. These bills that were designed to protect citizens' rights faced much resistance.

This shows a pattern of distrust of the People of Maine held by some in the Legislature. We see that in the bills being heard today, once again proposing restrictions and waiting periods adverse to the rights of lawful citizens. It is not the State that should distrust the citizens, but the citizens must maintain a healthy distrust of the State. The paranoia of the State that come with Statism does not promote liberty, and history shows the grim results of Statism.

Any answer to gun violence must not go contrary to our right to bear arms, or assume guilt until proven innocent. Laws already on the books must be enforced rather than hampering the ability for those at risk to protect themselves.

The issue with violence in our State is one that can't be fixed by bans or even, at its core, the mental health system. This is a spiritual problem, which history again proves that the State cannot fix. Good morals can't come from spiritually dead people.

"But God, being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved--"

Ephesians 2:4-5 (LSB)

I ask the members of this Committee to vote Ought Not to Pass. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Nathan C Gould,

Winterport

³ LD 624, LD 52, LD 518, LD 1557