

March 7, 2024 - Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee on JUDICIARY

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

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Francis H. Dore. I'm a resident of Sanford, Maine. I am testifying in support of LD 2224.

Although I cannot imagine that our society will ever be free from gun violence, I strongly believe that we must always work toward achieving that goal.

As a former victim of incidents involving handguns, I understand the impact of their use.

Sec. 3. 15 MRSA §395 in the bill, “Background Checks of Firearm Buyers” is important, not only in its own right but because it supports and sets the stage for LD 2238.

I was pleased to see the addition of Injury and violence prevention programs in the “children and families” section and the inclusion of “extreme risk protection orders” training for law enforcement officers.

Most important for me is the proposal to create Crisis Receiving Centers. I suffer from mental health issues and have seen, firsthand, the faults in the current system. As a retired paramedic and a strong supporter of mental health awareness and treatment, I am very aware of the critical need for an immediate improvement in the availability of beds in mental health short-term and long-term facilities and the emphasis on retainment and recruitment of trained care providers.

I strongly urge your support for this extremely important bill.

Thank you.