

**Pinette, Susan**

---

**From:** George Fogg <gaffer1531@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 2, 2024 3:10 PM  
**To:** JUD  
**Subject:** Proposed bills to solve the mass shootings

**This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.**

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am an old man who lives with his wife in the Schooner Estates in Auburn. We live here as my wife has Alzheimer's and at our age of 91 years we need such assistance. Prior to coming here we lived some 35+ years in North Yarmouth, Maine. I am a retired telephone manager moving to Maine in 1983 for AT&T prior to divestiture. While here I became interested in helping with the Maine Hunter Safety and became a Master Hunter Safety Instructor where I volunteered my time and expertise to train new hunters in the art of safe hunting. Over the many years that I did this job I trained well over 2000 new hunters in the safe use of firearms.

I was born in Greene, Maine and got interested in competitive shooting at the age of 18 and have shot all my life in the various different categories of competitive shooting. I hold various firearm instructor ratings, including Range Safety Officer. As noted above I was a Master Hunter Safety Instructor, shooting competitor, hunter and taught Small Bore Competitive Rifle for many decades. During those 70 plus years I have fired millions of rounds of ammo safely, with no injuries to student or myself.

One of many lessons I taught was to place a half dozen firearms on a table in the front of the classroom and let the students look them over some period of time without touching them until I felt their interest was so peaked they were ready to understand the lesson on safe handling. I stressed the fact that that they were just inert pieces of steel, wood or plastic and nothing more until a person picks up the object to better look at it or hunt with it. That is a fact that many do not understand or even try to comprehend. A firearm is just another tool like a hammer, chainsaw or knife. It only become dangerous when used improperly.

The point in my lessons was that the most dangerous part of the scenario is the person. The point I was stressing was that it was not the firearm but the user. In the sad story of the Lewiston mass shooting it is obvious that it was not the firearm who should be blamed but the person operating the device and the state laws that were obviously overlooked or ignored. Had the various people in authority done their do diligence, including legislators who create laws to protect the public Mr. Card would still be alive and being treated for his mental illness and some 18 other innocent people would still be alive. I have long thought that Legislators fool themselves with laws as most legislation have a weakness that the public easily circumvents.

My point is that this whole tragedy has lawmakers, both federal and state looking at firearms to solve the issue of mass shootings when they need to be looking at ways mental health treatment issues could better solve the problem. Some blame firearm as it does not vote while others avoid mental health issues because they cause public criticism. The fact remains that almost all the media, in this now horrible story, show that dozens of chances to prevent this debacle were missed by government agencies and law enforcement groups in several

states . Most of these good people hope that firearms get the blame as it lessens the guilt each feels themselves. That is sad!

Lastly most have forgotten that we are a free nation because of the use of firearms. When danger threatens we call the police who come to our need with firearms. Firearms are a tool of protection and freedom. If all firearms are done away with our very freedom is in jeopardy. That is a fact few even consider but those who represent us need to. I sincerely hope that as these proposals are debated all sides will get brought out and carefully considered as to there long term effect.

Sincerely,

George A. Fogg

200 Stetson Rd. apt 646

Auburn, ME 04210

Sent from Mail for Windows