



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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March 7, 2024

Testimony of Representative Margaret Craven in support of
**LD 2224, An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and
Mental Health System**
Before the Judiciary Committee

Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Margaret Craven, and I represent House District 93, which is part of Lewiston. I am here today to speak in strong support of **LD 2224, An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System**.

I live ½ a mile away from the bowling alley in Lewiston, in which there was a mass shooting on October 25th. The despair and hopelessness I felt watching my neighbors suffering shock, pain, confusion, fear, sadness, grief and hopelessness, is difficult to articulate.

On that sad day, my disappointment and dismay was deep. I sponsored my first gun safety bill in 2007, when a young neighbor of mine walked into Walmart, bought a gun and ammunition, came straight home and took his own life. He was just 18. I know, as did his mother, that if he had to wait a couple of days to receive the weapon, he would be alive today.

I also know that this bill does not have a waiting period measure in it, but I make the connection to this tragic story to point out that access is a problem. In the first half of the 131st Legislature, several legislators sponsored common-sense gun safety legislation, including myself. None of these measures passed, thus the hopelessness we felt continued.

However, I think there is reason for hope. This bill brought forth by the Chief Executive is an important step forward, and I think Mainers are uniting in support of common-sense gun safety legislation.

Identifying the signs and signals before a shooting happens is paramount to keeping weapons out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

This bill outlines sensible gun safety measures. We have been struggling with the holes in background checks, and this bill goes a long way towards closing them. Private sales are still a worry, but we are getting closer. I ask you to improve and close the gaps in your deliberations.

Thank you for your time, and I ask you sincerely, that you remember the lives lost on the 25th of October when you are voting this bill out.