

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Erik Perkins, and I live in Mattawamkeag. I was born and raised in Albion. I spent several years living in California. Of all of the 107 gun laws there, the 10 day waiting period is the least justifiable and most patently harmful. So, I oppose LD 2238.

The rationales for waiting periods for firearm transfers are either to provide time to run background checks, or to provide a cooling off period for impulsive violence or suicide. The first rationale, still claimed by California, has been moot for decades - background checks take minutes.

The second rationale is spurious. "Cooling off period" sounds a lot like "gateway drug", an archaic platitude. Purchasing a firearm takes at least an hour. In the case of homicide, that isn't impulse, it's premeditation. A homicide victim will be just as dead three days from now.

Having time to reconsider suicide seems plausible, but waiting periods only make a difference for someone who doesn't already own a firearm. The actual effect seems unimpressive - a recent study [1] based on data from California shows a 100-fold increase in suicide risk in the three weeks immediately **after** the end of the lengthy waiting period. If the point of waiting is to cool off, there doesn't seem to be much of a decrease in temperature. Another prominent study even admits that its findings "suggest that any decrease in gun suicides due to waiting periods is offset by an increase in non-gun suicides" [2]. The suicidal either just wait, or find another way.

For the rest of us who don't want to kill anyone, waiting periods are completely unfair. For those of us who already own guns, about half of the households in this state, they're completely pointless. For those under known and imminent threats of violence, like Calley Garay [3] or Carol Bowne [4], waiting periods are deadly, and restraining orders aren't bulletproof.

California is the archetype for ineffective laws based on wishful thinking. I didn't want to come back home to Maine, only to be greeted by what I had just left.

Thank you.

References

[1] Studdert et al. "Handgun Ownership and Suicide in California," *New England Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 382, No. 23, 2020, pp. 2220–2229

[2] Luca et al. "Handgun Waiting Periods Reduce Gun Deaths," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 114, No. 46, 2017, pp. 12162–12165.

[3] Lewis, R. "Outgunned: The story of a woman, an abuser, and California's failing gun control," 11/7/2021, CalMatters. <https://calmatters.org/justice/2021/11/california-gun-control/>

[4] Adomaitis, G. "Berlin murder victim told neighbor about gun permit application, then nothing," 6/5/2015, NJ.com. https://www.nj.com/camden/2015/06/berlin_murder_victim_told_neighbor_about_gun_permi.html