

The Honorable Janet Mills  
1 State House Station  
Augusta ME 04333

The Honorable Angus King  
40 Western Ave, E.S. Muskie Federal Building, Room 412  
Augusta, Maine 04330

The Honorable Troy Jackson  
167 Allagash Road  
Allagash, ME 04774

The Honorable Eloise Vitelli  
3 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Governor Mills, Senator King, Senator Jackson and Senator Vitelli,

As mental health practitioners in Maine, we have seen firsthand the impact of gun violence on our community. The trauma it inflicts is not just physical but psychological and these psychological wounds are widespread and insidious. We feel strongly that preventative measures of basic gun safety regulation is a vital step in preventative health care for our state.

**This is what we request:**

- 1) Institute a 72-hour waiting period after purchasing a gun
- 2) Institute a mandatory background check before purchasing a gun
- 3) Implement a red flag law
- 4) Ban Assault weapons as well as rapid-fire modification devices

**Here is why we know taking these steps will be effective:**

A waiting period allows crucial time for impulsive buyers or those intending harm to reconsider their decisions, gain psychiatric help if needed or be intercepted by law enforcement. Behavioral economics and psychology suggest this is an

effective practice due to the intensity of the impulse to hurt oneself or others being often transient. Harvard Business School found that waiting periods could reduce gun homicides by roughly 17%. As nearly 90% of Maine's gun deaths are suicides, a waiting period is likely to significantly reduce Maine's overall suicide rate and overall gun deaths. It would also decrease our veteran suicide rate, which is nearly double our overall suicide rate.

Mandatory background checks are essential to ensure that firearms do not end up in the hands of someone with malintent. Currently, private sellers in Maine are not required to conduct background checks. This loophole needs to be closed. The FBI reported through the freedom of information act that in 2020 the background check system in place for gun sales blocked over 300,000 illegal gun sales.

Implementing a red flag law would allow family members or law enforcement officers to petition for the temporary removal of firearms from individuals deemed at risk of harming themselves or others. Our yellow flag law requires a psychiatric evaluation before a judge can be asked to put through a court order. This creates a slower system at a time of acute need for fast intervention with someone at risk to themselves or others. A study from UC Davis showed that the red flag law was effectively used in 58 cases of individuals threatening mass shootings in California in the last three years. The Journal of Psychiatric Services researched the impact of the red flag law in Connecticut and found a 13.7% decrease in firearm suicides after enforcing the red flag law.

Assault weapons are designed for rapid fire and combat not for civilian protection. According to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, while the federal assault weapons ban was in place mass shootings were 70% less likely to occur.

There is clear evidence that implementing these laws together would allow for a safety net to better support those struggling with mental health issues and help prevent unnecessary physical and psychological trauma. We urge lawmakers in Maine to consider these measures seriously to support mental health within our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mental Health Practitioners for Basic Gun Safety.  
Initiated by Victoria Libby M.S.Ed., Psy.D.

2024/01/01 3:43: Jeff Matranga, Pl 2 Big Sky Lane, \ Jeffmatranga@g  
2024/01/01 4:06: Quynn Morehou 23 Thompson St Drquynnmoreho  
2024/01/01 4:57: Michael S Dixon 126 Everett Rd michaelsdixonph  
2024/01/01 5:02: Catherine Leschr 107 Delano Park Kate.leschey@gr  
2024/01/01 5:34: Dr. Kathleen Har 87 Woodlands Dr kathleenhart@ha  
2024/01/01 5:36: Liza Little 75B st , South P LIZALITTLE55@GMA  
2024/01/01 8:27: Rebecca Reid Br 16 verrill road gr Rreid@maine.ed  
2024/01/02 8:36: Sarah Kelly 37 Horseshoe Dr sarkelcope@gma  
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2024/01/02 11:5: Laura Sproch Saco, ME drsproch@gmail.  
2024/01/02 2:52: Christopher McL: PO Box 1291 Ba cmclaughlin.nasv  
2024/01/02 3:43: Julie M. Schirme 6 Lincoln Farms jschirme4@gmai  
2024/01/02 3:58: Lauren Dattilo, P 46 Elm Street, Tr drdattilo@psychc  
2024/01/02 6:30: Jordyn Deschene 13 Beech Road S Jordyn.deschene  
2024/01/02 7:05: Mary McCann 16 Marigold Lane Drmmccann@gn  
2024/01/03 6:37: Michelle Kanga 4 Kimberley Circl Drkanga@psych.  
2024/01/03 9:26: deborah como-ke 6 cumberland st, debkepler@yaho  
2024/01/03 5:47: Alexandra Schro 15 Ivie Rd Alexnschroder@.  
2024/01/04 3:07: Jenna Labbe-Wa 168 W. Meadow drlabbewatson@  
2024/01/15 8:42: Layne Gregory 120 Woodville R limgregory12255i  
2024/01/30 11:0: Dustin Spencer-L 215 Berry Road, dlheureux.lcsw@  
2024/01/30 12:0: Rebecca Lyons, Kennebunk Main R Lyons@SacoM  
2024/01/30 2:01: RITA ALFONSO BELGRADE REC ritaalfonso.labart  
2024/01/30 2:29: Shelby Chamber 28 North St. Apt. shelbychamberlir  
2024/01/30 2:34: Deanne Ochoa-E 593 Washington dochoadurrell@c  
2024/01/30 7:14: Audrey J Yeaton 69 Raydon Rd E: audrey@yeatonp  
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2024/01/31 7:40: Jennifer McCann 186 Ocean Hous jmccann211@gn  
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2024/01/31 12:3: Carol Zack 84 Eastern Prom czackatnefi@gm  
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2024/02/03 7:39: Nancy Plouffe, L P.O. Box 1102, E nplouffe@yahoo.  
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2024/02/09 2:57: Devin Elizabeth ` 10 Melody Lane deyhillery@gmai  
2024/02/12 11:0: Erin McGann 48 Emus Way Yc erin.mcgann1@c  
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2024/03/02 11:0: Anna Strout 10 Robinhood Rc annagstrout@grr  
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