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Women For Gun rights State Director

Maine resident my whole life, mother, former foster parent/adoptive mother, teacher, small business owner and runs and organization:

A.W.E. (Academy of Women Empowerment)

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I'm here to oppose LD 2238

As well as LD 2224

This bill would create a very dangerous time for victims of abuse who are fleeing their abuser. Carole Browne of New Jersey learned the hard way what happens when you have to wait to legally have a firearm. She was stabbed to death by her ex boyfriend while waiting to obtain a permit so she could own a firearm.

In the last 10 years of teaching, I've worked with many women, battered, scared and terrified of their children witnessing their death. They came to me because they learned in most situations, the police come after the fact. I always recommend they get a protection order, but I also teach them what to do until the police arrive. Part of that plan is often a firearm.

Women who flee an abuser are at the greatest risk of death in those first few weeks. Many women come to me as an instructor scared, knowing their abuser is not afraid of a restraining order because it's just a piece of paper. They need protection and they need it fast. Waiting is not an option. Red flag bills create an avenue for abusers to unarm their victims.

When going through a bad divorce, my now ex husband threatened me. Because of his behavior I was granted a protection of abuse order and in that order, it said he was to give his firearms to the police. The police called me and asked if he had firearms and I told them exactly what he had and where they were located. He was served his protection order but

no firearms were taken from him. When I discovered the firearms in the closet and called the police, I was told they didn't have enough officers to come in and get them so I had to deliver them to the police myself. May abuse victims would not feel safe doing this. They shouldn't have to check to see if the police are doing their job when serving PFAs to their abuser.

It concerns me greatly that laws in place already aren't being enforced, yet you want to make it harder for good people to protect themselves by making them wait after already being cleared by a background check.

We don't have evidence it would save lives, but as we see in New Jersey and other states with waiting periods, women have been killed because of them. Criminals don't follow laws, that's why we call them criminals.

Monday, I had the honor to sit in the Lewiston Town Hall and listen in person as Survivors from the Lewiston shooting spoke to the safety committee about what happened and answered questions. They were all so brave. I encourage all of you to take the time and listen to that meeting. What this bill is asking would do nothing to prevent what happened in Lewiston. We already have laws and processes to stop people like Card. The ball was dropped, the buck was passed and what happened in Lewiston should never have happened.

The investigations and reports aren't even out yet and you're trying to push more laws that won't help and will only disarm law abiding citizens. Listen to the survivors, they want answers about why nothing was done.

We need more mental health resources.
We need our laws enforced.

I'm happy to answer any questions