

April 9, 2024

OUGHT TO PASS testimony in support of LD 2283

State House, Augusta Maine

Thank you to the all the Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee for today's hearing, and especially for the addition of this hearing due to extreme weather last week which prevented me from testifying.

My name is Jeannine Oren. I live in Casco. I raised my two sons in the Lakes Region of Maine. I am also a grandmother, and I am a gun owner.

I am here today as a domestic violence survivor who was threatened with a shotgun in 2005 by my then husband...a fact that I testified to at his criminal sentencing after he violated the protection from abuse order I had recently secured.

I'm also here as a founding member of FINDING OUR VOICES – the statewide grassroots survivor-powered domestic violence prevention and awareness non-profit founded by Patrisha McLean of Camden back in 2019. We're the group that has put up thousands of posters across the state of Maine of Maine women who were targeted by domestic abuse perpetrators who have successfully escaped these toxic and sometimes deadly relationships.

What I have learned over the years, especially as it relates to domestic violence and gun violence, which are insidiously linked, are two very important things:

BOTH are preventable because BOTH are predictable.

Your support of LD 22⁸³~~28~~ in the form of a vote "Ought to Pass" addresses the "preventable" part. The greater the number of people who have the opportunity and the responsibility to intervene in a possible gun violence incident, the greater the chances of reducing the risk. Just look what we have learned from the Lewiston report. And the sooner the intervention can occur, the better. This bill addresses both of those matters. And the bill doesn't infringe on my 2nd amendment rights.

The “predictable” part is simply acknowledging that the so-called “red flags” that we talk about so often AFTER THE FACT are real. Gun violence doesn’t happen in a vacuum. In fact, people who are prone to commit gun violence (either through self harm, or harm to others) often openly talk about it publicly prior to actually pulling the trigger. One of the most important things we do as members of Finding Our Voices is talk with women about the “red flags” associated with domestic violence and gun violence – simply because it is so lethal. And we believe we have saved women’s lives because of our work.

We need to pay attention to what people are telling us about what they are thinking about doing with guns. And we need to tools to do something about it.

So again, I urge you to vote OUGHT TO PASS in support of LD 2283.

Thank you.



Jeannine Oren

Casco, ME 04015

joren@maine.rr.com