



Cumberland County District Attorney's Office

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Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am submitting this testimony on my behalf and on behalf of District Attorney Maeghan Maloney and District Attorney Todd Collins in Support of **LD 2283—An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public.**

When given an option, we prefer a straightforward process over a complicated one. This bill takes into consideration the emergency nature of the circumstances and has much better enforcement and prevention tools than the current law. It empowers the family members and other concerned parties to take action without having to wield the authority of State actors. It is more akin to the protective order process, which has proven to be quite workable and effective in Maine without the need for government agencies to drive the proceedings.

In our specific experience, especially in the days following the tragic Lewiston shootings which have seen a very significant increase in yellow flag referrals, the current WRO process requires significant prosecutor time to accommodate procedural interests of gun owners through needlessly cumbersome process. We have no additional staffing to meet this demand. As those who must ensure that our prosecutor resources meet the need to cover criminal matters and protect public safety, this necessarily comes at a cost to our other cases. This is particularly troubling given that the existing law, even with proposed changes, fails to adequately include much of the most concerning potential gun violence.

WRO simply focuses unduly on mental health, although that is well-established as not a precondition for most gun violence, including suicide and, most often, mass shootings. We are concerned that this approach fails to adequately meet Maine's public safety interest. Yellow flag, although well-intended, unfortunately serves as a red herring, failing to allow those closest to a gun owner planning self-harm or a mass shooting from intervening to protect their loved one or other Mainers.

Please join us in supporting LD 2283.

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