

Senator Carney, Representative Mooney, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Anne Coughlin. I have lived on Peaks Island since moving to Maine from Colorado in 2020. I am here to speak in support of LD2283, a true Extreme Risk Protection Order bill,

This Committee recently advanced to the full legislature several bill that, when adopted, will bring Maine citizens some of the best evidence based strategies available in America to protect lives, while also honoring the rights of responsible gun owners. Thank you.

I attended the public hearings on those bills. With you, I listened to the impressive array of medical and law enforcement professionals, along with ordinary citizens, who showed up to advocate for a true Extreme Risk Protection Order. LD2283 is a powerful response to that need.

My daughter has struggled throughout her life with mental illnesses. My husband and I all too often have had to be front line advocates for her safety and that of her children. When lives are on the line, everyone—families as well as law enforcement — need to have the ability to respond quickly.

But I strongly agree with the testimony you heard two weeks ago, emphasizing that in most cases mental illness is NOT the criteria that determines risk to self or others. Requiring a professional medical evaluation before seizing guns, as Maine currently does, makes no sense. Maine is the only state out of the 21 with some kind of risk protection order process that requires this. There is no evidence I could find that the residents of those 20 other states have been harmed by its absence. Nor have any of the 20 other state legislatures advanced bills to repeal or weaken a Red Flag law once it was in place, suggesting even doubtful citizens have come to trust their process.

A timely, rigorous hearing process after guns have been seized is the key to guaranteeing that individuals whose guns have been seized have fair treatment. This bill provides those guidelines in great detail.

As a Maine resident I am delighted to see this proposed legislation builds on the excellent models that have been developed in other states, including several such as Colorado where gun ownership is a dearly held value. I urge the Judiciary Committee to forward LD2283 to the full legislature with a unanimous Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your attention, and for all you do for Maine.