

April 5, 2024

Testimony in Support of LD 2283

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Hillary Shende from Brunswick, and I am here to testify in favor of LD 2283.

This bill simply offers an additional pathway for weapons to be removed from dangerous people. A concerned family member could go straight to a court for an evidentiary hearing, and after enough evidence of dangerousness is presented, a judge could issue a temporary weapons restriction. The order would only be in effect for 14 days; sufficient evidence of continued dangerousness would need to be presented at second hearing to extend the order for another 14 days, and so on. In the meantime, innocent people can avoid being slaughtered.

The Card family were vocal about their concerns. If they had had the option of going straight to a judge, as this true ERPO bill provides, that could have prevented the massacre in Lewiston last fall.

Now, the folks opposed to this bill are likely to say a few things that I want to get out ahead of. The first thing they are likely to say is that this bill takes away due process rights. Not true. As I just described, there is an evidentiary hearing in front of a judge, where substantial evidence of dangerousness has to be presented before anyone's weapons can be removed.

Another thing they will say is that this bill will only harm law-abiding citizens. No. It will not. If you are a law-abiding citizen, and there is no evidence that you intend to harm yourself or others, this bill will not affect you in the least. You can still hunt, protect your home, or have fun at the shooting range, no problem at all.

Finally, they will say, "but the second amendment!" This bill doesn't call for repealing the second amendment. There have been laws preventing prohibited people from possessing firearms for decades, and so far, everyone, including the courts, seems to think it's a good idea to keep them, as long as those people have been found to be dangerous in a court of law. Which is exactly what this bill does. Please pass it before we experience another senseless massacre, because the next one is surely coming. Thank you.