

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am Chris Campbell. I live in Yarmouth and am a professor emeritus at UMaine. I am here today in support of LD 2283, "An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public".

This past year has been a hard one for Mainers, starting with the Bowdoin and Yarmouth shootings. On that day, our daughter, who also lives in Yarmouth, was home alone with her three kids. She got them inside and locked all the doors. My wife and I were far away at the time and could do nothing but fear for their safety. Fortunately, they were okay. Six months later the Lewiston shooting dispelled any remaining thoughts that Maine was immune to this kind of horror.

We Mainers want our family, friends, and communities to be safe. We want change. On January third, more than 1000 of us visited the Maine State House to advocate for meaningful gun safety reform. That day, the father of one of the children who was killed in Lewiston urged the crowd to "do the right thing".

Governor Mills did the right thing by responding quickly to fill some of the glaring gaps in Maine's gun safety laws. But a critical gap remains. Maine needs a true extreme risk protection order (ERPO) as outlined in the bill before you today.

An ERPO would allow family members or law enforcement to petition a judge to temporarily remove firearms from someone at risk of hurting themselves or others. ERPOs are an efficient and effective tool against mass shootings and, according to research, have prevented hundreds of mass shootings in other states¹. An FBI study showed that active shooters display concerning prior behaviors, such as signs of violent intentions². An ERPO law would give family and law enforcement the opportunity to respond productively to such warning signs, keeping their loved one and the community safe. Such a law could have prevented the terrible tragedy in Lewiston.

Importantly, ERPO laws are also effective at preventing suicide. Temporarily separating someone in crisis from a firearm can give loved ones the opportunity to intervene and provide help. Given Maine's high rate of suicide by firearm, this bill is an important public safety measure to save Maine lives.

LD.2283 would help law enforcement maintain safe communities and families get help for their loved ones. **I urge you to vote ought to pass.**

References

1. April M. Zeoli, et al., "Extreme risk protection orders in response to threats of multiple victim/mass shooting in six U.S. states: A descriptive study," *Preventive Medicine* 165, part A (2022): 107304.

2. An FBI study of the pre-attack behaviors of active shooters found that the average shooter displayed four to five observable and concerning behaviors over time, related to not just the shooter's mental health but also problematic interpersonal interactions or other signs of violent intentions.