Good afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, Committee members, and staff.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Mary Jo Bateman and I am a mother,
grandmother, daughter of a veteran and gun owner, and volunteer with the Maine chapter of
Moms Demand Action. I moved to Rockport three years ago and have been putting in as much time as possible volunteering with millions of people working to pass safer gun legislation as a way to support my new community that I love so much.

I am here to speak in support of LD 2283, An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to
Protect the Safety of the Public.

In 1999, my three now-adult children were in school when the mass killing at Columbine High
School happened: one was in high school, one in middle school, and one in elementary. My
oldest son now lives in Charlottesville – where three students were shot on grounds in the last two years. My niece was a student at Virginia Tech when the mass shooting happened. She lost a friend and her French Professor.

I am now a grandmother to a 20 month old and dreading when she will enter school in three
years – having to practice active shooter drills. I hate the idea of her parents worrying about
whether she'll come home from school at the end of the day. I worry about the future of ALL young children in this country as they grow up – not feeling safe and knowing the statistics of mass shootings in this country. The crisis of gun violence is a uniquely American crisis and I remain heartbroken that we cannot feel safe living in the United States. We CAN change this. We know safer gun laws have the approval of the majority of Americans. 1

I am testifying today because I strongly support the creation of crisis intervention orders as
another tool for Mainers to be able to remove the access to firearms for those in crisis, after

family members identify the warning signs. With crisis intervention orders, family members can directly petition a court to ensure that anyone who, for any reason, poses an immediate threat of harming themselves or others does not have access to firearms.

Family members are often the first to identify the warning signs that someone is in crisis, and
they need the legal tools to be able to disarm someone. Especially for cases where law
enforcement may be underfunded or understaffed, and unable to jump through the procedural steps of the yellow flag law – as the interim findings in the Lewiston Commission identified in the case of the tragedy nearly six months ago – a crisis protection order could serve as another tool to disarm someone in crisis.

Neighboring states of Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, in addition to 18 other states
across the country, have similar crisis intervention orders on the books, often referred to as red flag laws or extreme risk laws. 2 They have been proven to help de-escalate emergency
situations and prevent a range of forms of gun violence, not just mass shootings. With Maine's sobering firearm suicide rate accounting for nearly 90% of all firearm-related deaths in the state, we need to use every tool possible to stop someone from making a potentially deadly decision. 3

Nearly six months ago, Lewiston was devastated by tragedy and that tragedy has had ripple
effects across all of Maine, including my town of Rockport. In the wake of this tragedy, I am
grateful that our lawmakers have introduced so many measures to prevent this same pain from being experienced ever again, including the bill being discussed in today's hearing, LD 2283.

I encourage members of the committee to vote YES on today's bill, LD 2283.
This concludes my testimony. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here today.

1 Jeffrey M. Jones, "Majority in U.S. Continues to Favor Stricter Gun Laws," Gallup, October 31, 2023, https://bit.ly/3TF2p42.

2 Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, "Extreme Risk Laws Save Lives," March 14, 2024, https://everytownresearch.org/report/extreme-risk-laws-save-lives/.

3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death. A yearly average was developed using four years of the most recent available data: 2018 to 2021.