

I

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

My name is Margo Donnis. I live in South Portland. I am a retired Mainer.

I'm here to provide testimony in opposition to LD 486.

Saturday evening, I drove home on a foggy unfamiliar rural road. I had a hard time seeing the edge of the pavement, as the white lines - usually there - had been worn off or had not been repainted. Easily, my right front wheel could have dropped to the muddy road side, tripping my car from the road. Had this happened, I would have needed help. I can imagine reaching for my cell phone and recalling that I had left it at home. Then, seeing a home with lights on nearby, I'd walk to the front door and knock.

Today, I'd not fear to stand at that stranger's door and ask for help. Should LD 486 be enacted, I'd hesitate. I'd know that the homeowner had every right to shoot me if they feared me.

I am the blessed grandmother of an active baby boy. Should he be a cub scout, I expect he will ask me 'Why can't we knock on people's doors to ask them to buy cub-scout popcorn?' How sad that I may have to answer 'because it is not safe', even as I am thinking 'because Maine lawmakers gave them the right to shoot you - no questions asked.'

Today Maine is known for being a safe state. We have earned that reputation by our willingness to help strangers who have car trouble and by welcoming new neighbors with blueberry pies.

I oppose LD 486 because I know there are troubled, lonely Maine gun owners who surely do not need permission to shoot me because I knocked on their door and scared them.

I am here testifying against LD 486 because I want my safe Maine to endure. I'm testifying so I can sleep tonight, knowing that I spoke up about keeping Maine safe.

I am here because, should I read of a shooting in the Press Herald on some future day, I can say to myself: 'I tried. I spoke up.'