

# Maine gun safety COALITION

Thank you, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the committee. My name is Nacole Palmer, and I serve as executive director of the Maine Gun Safety Coalition.

Three bills before the committee this morning (LDs 677 (Rapid Fire Modification Device ban), LD 1126 (Requiring all firearms to be serialized), and 1109 (Large Capacity Magazine ban)) will help keep our communities safe and crack down on illegal guns on our streets. It is critical, now more than ever, that we do what we can at the state and local levels to protect our families and promote gun responsibility.

Unserialized, untraceable, and unregulated guns are an ever growing threat to our communities. These guns – commonly called ‘ghost guns’ – are firearms assembled from unserialized components purchased online and assembled at home or even 3D printed at home. Between 2016 and 2021, the number of ghost guns recovered by law enforcement agencies nationwide increased by more than 1,000 percent. And Maine is not immune to this new trend. In 2022, a 16-year-old Mainer who otherwise would not have been able to purchase a handgun was able to order parts online anonymously and assemble a gun which he then used to shoot and kill someone in the Bangor area.

No matter our political background, we can all agree that there is no good reason for someone to be able to dodge a background check by buying gun parts that are actively marketed as “untraceable” because they lack serial numbers. The fact is that *unserialized firearms are uniquely designed for criminal activity*. That’s why the Maine Sheriffs support this bill, because the ghost gun industry puts law enforcement at risk and makes it harder for them to do their jobs and protect us from criminals. This bill would simply require that unserialized firearm products are treated by the same standards as purchased firearms in Maine. Responsible gun owners who enjoy assembling guns as a hobby can still do so. But dangerous criminals will no longer be able to acquire unserialized gun parts, as we will take critical steps to support law enforcement in holding domestic abusers and other criminals accountable.

Two other critical bills before you today would restrict rapid fire modification devices, which includes a common-sense restoration of the restriction on machine gun conversion devices, called 'bump stocks,' and a restriction on large capacity magazines, a proposal that's been passed in many other states to successfully deter would-be mass shooters. Bump stocks were already illegal federally for a time until it was overturned on a technicality. LD 677 would restore this protection in Maine and restrict devices that have been used in mass shootings and other horrific incidents of gunfire across the country, including in New England.

Our values at the Maine Gun Safety Coalition reflect the values of Mainers – we strongly believe in gun rights, and we believe that gun rights come with responsibilities. We can ensure protections for law-abiding gun owners while also doing everything we can to keep our kids, families, and communities safe. I urge you to vote ought to pass on LDs 677, 1126, and 1109, and I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 953.

Thank you for your time and consideration.