

Testimony in Support of
LD 677 "An Act to Update the Statutory Definition of 'Machine Gun'"
And Prohibit Possession of a Rapid-fire Device"

And

LD 1126 "An Act Requiring Serial Numbers on Firearms and Prohibiting Undetectable Firearms"

March 26, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honored Members of the Committee, I am Claudia Hatch, I live in Woolwich, and I am a retired Clinical Social Worker and a Grandmother.

My oldest grandchild was six years old when the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting occurred. He was the same age as many of the children who were killed. The vulnerability of those little ones and that it could have been my own grandchild hit me at a very visceral level. I experienced a deep sense of grief as many throughout the nation did.

Since that time the number of school shootings and mass shootings have increased beyond comprehension. When I went to school or even when my children went to school, I never thought about the risk of children being killed or shot. I now have a daughter who is a school administrator who has had to face lock downs and threats of violence. The stress of knowing you could very well be the one confronting someone with a gun and becoming the target is very scary.

And then, of course, there was the mass shooting in Lewiston. We can no longer pretend that the proliferation of guns and the power and the speed of the firing of guns is not a problem.

Every Fall I participate with extended family members in their excitement and anticipation of the Hunting Season. I take pride in their successes with shooting a deer or a moose, and I appreciate their skills and the traditions of what hunting means to them. I respect their rights of lawfully using firearms.

However, in a changing world, there must be a way of addressing the current safety concerns and public health issues that have evolved due to advances in technology. In my professional life as a Clinical Social Worker, I was and am keenly aware of the mental health challenges our country faces. Both mental health and gun safety issues must be addressed. It is not one or the other.

Today I am here to advocate for LD 677 to prohibit Rapid Fire Modification Devices. I had family members present at the October 2017 shooting at the Music Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada,

where a shooter equipped with a bump stock fired over 1,000 rounds and killed 60 people and wounded over 400. Thankfully, my family escaped unharmed, but again the vulnerability becomes all too clear. States with magazine capacity limits experience mass shootings at half the rate compared to states without such restrictions.

I am, also, here in support of LD 1126 for an Act to require serial numbers on firearms and prohibiting undetectable firearms. These recommendations would hold unserialized firearm products including those constructed with 3D printers to the same standards as all other guns in Maine. We must maintain and strengthen protections for Maine residents to prevent gun violence. We must respect everyone's right to be safe.