

Testimony of Peter Murray in Support of LD 1126

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, Members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Peter Murray. I live in Portland and have been a member of the Bar of the State of Maine for more than 55 years.

Fundamental to effective enforcement of firearms laws and investigation of crimes involving firearms is the long-established system by which every firearm carries an indelible serial number. In the past it has sometimes been possible to file off gun serial numbers. A relative handful of weapons have been hand crafted without serial numbers. However now the growing use of 3-D printing and widespread sale of gun parts for user assembly has caused the proportion of anonymous firearms or “ghost guns” involved in violent crime to rise to a level of a serious law enforcement problem. LD 1126 is designed to fill existing loopholes for unserialized firearms so that every Maine firearm, no matter how manufactured, will bear a unique indelible serial number.

It is hard to imagine why a legitimate gun owner would want to use or carry a “ghost gun.” It is very easy to imagine why various kinds of gun violence wrongdoers would gravitate to unserialized weapons in hopes of making it harder for law enforcement to identify and apprehend them.

The development of 3-D printing and the ease by which gun parts can be purchased on the internet make guns seem almost like toys. Guns are not toys. They should not be treated as toys. No matter how created, every gun is a deadly weapon. As a deadly weapon, every gun should be at least identifiable.

LD 1126 is a carefully crafted measure that outlaws ghost guns and makes all Maine firearms identifiable. We owe such a measure to our fellow citizens and especially our law enforcement men and women as they investigate crime. Please vote this bill “Ought to Pass.”