



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Rep. Quentin Chapman introducing*  
**L.D. 1230, An Act to Abolish the 72-hour Waiting Period for a Gun Purchase**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*  
April 16, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Quentin Chapman, proudly representing House District 88 in Auburn. I am proud to present L.D. 1230, “An Act to Abolish the 72-hour Waiting Period for a Gun Purchase.”

Thank you for considering this proposal to repeal Maine’s 72-hour waiting period for firearm purchases. I understand your commitment to reducing gun violence and protecting our communities, especially after tragedies like Lewiston. However, I believe this policy, though well-intended, misses the mark and creates unintended burdens for Mainers. Repealing it would align with fairness, empower vulnerable citizens, and focus on solutions that truly enhance safety.

First, let’s look at the evidence. Studies, including a 2017 American Journal of Public Health analysis, show waiting periods don’t consistently reduce gun violence or suicides. In Maine, where illegal gun trafficking often fuels crime, delaying lawful purchases doesn’t address the root issue—firearms acquired outside legal channels. The National Instant Criminal Background Check System already ensures prohibited buyers are flagged instantly. Adding a 72-hour wait assumes every Mainer is a risk, which isn’t supported by data.

Second, this policy can harm those we aim to protect. Imagine a domestic violence survivor in Aroostook County, far from immediate help, needing a firearm for self-defense. Three days could leave them vulnerable. Maine’s rural reality means law enforcement isn’t always minutes away. Repealing the waiting period empowers individuals—

especially women and marginalized groups—to protect themselves without delay, aligning with progressive values of autonomy and equity. Third, the waiting period burdens responsible Mainers. Our state’s hunting and sporting traditions are part of our identity. For someone in Skowhegan or Presque Isle, traveling hours to a gun shop twice in three days costs time and money many can’t spare. Most buyers pass background checks on the spot. Why penalize them with red tape that doesn’t measurably improve safety?

I know concerns about impulsive acts drive support for this law. But mental health crises aren’t solved by short delays—they demand investment in counseling, crisis hotlines, and community support. Maine’s stretched mental health system needs funding, not symbolic gestures. Repealing this restriction lets us redirect focus to prevention that works.

In closing, repealing the 72-hour waiting period respects Maine’s unique needs while upholding safety. It trusts law-abiding citizens, protects the vulnerable, and frees us to pursue evidence-based reforms—like cracking down on illegal gun sources and bolstering mental health care. Let’s make policy that reflects Maine’s values and realities.

Thank you.

Quentin Chapman  
State Representative