



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Jennifer Poirier on
LD 1062, "An Act to Eliminate Background Checks for Private
Sales of Firearms"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

April 16, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed colleagues of the committee,

I am Jennifer Poirier and I represent House District 70, which is the wonderful community of Skowhegan. Thank you for the opportunity to present **LD 1062, "An Act to Eliminate Background Checks for Private Sales of Firearms."** I am here not only as an elected legislator, but as a concerned citizen who values both personal freedom and the long-standing tradition of responsible gun ownership in our state.

Maine has one of the lowest crime rates in the nation, and we have maintained that safety not through excessive regulation, but through a culture of responsibility, respect, and education around firearms. Imposing mandatory background checks on private sales between law-abiding citizens is an unnecessary government overreach that does little to enhance public safety and instead burdens responsible gun owners.

Private sales between friends, neighbors, or longtime hunting partners should not require state intervention. These transactions are built on trust and community ties, not on anonymity. Criminals, by definition, do not follow the law—and they will continue to find ways to obtain firearms illegally, regardless of the restrictions placed on honest Mainers.

Last session, the legislature passed several firearm related bills, seemingly in response to the horrific tragedy in Lewiston. The current law on expanded background checks, which LD 1062 seeks to repeal, was based on the myth that background checks will reduce mass shootings. Most mass shooters pass background checks. In fact, the investigation revealed that Robert Card passed numerous background checks to obtain firearms. In fact, Robert Card was blocked from buying a suppressor months before the shooting because he self-reported that he was in a mental health facility on the form that the dealer is required to review. Some have claimed this as a reason to require background checks, but the process to obtain a suppressor is much different than that to purchase a firearm. Suppressors need

to be registered with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and firearms. You need to be approved to purchase and register as the owner of a suppressor prior to taking possession of it. The process is to fill out the required BATF form, get fingerprints done and photographs. You submit the paperwork and pay the \$200 transfer/registration fee (tax stamp). When you are approved, the dealer is authorized to transfer the suppressor to the individual WITH ANOTHER BACKGROUND CHECK. Robert Card not only passed a NICS background check, but he also successfully obtained a tax stamp. The only reason he was denied the suppressor was because he self-reported his stay in the mental health facility.

As I have stated to the committee time and time again, criminals and those with ill intent do not care about the laws we pass. Straw purchases are already illegal in Federal law and Maine law. Federal law also prohibits a person from purchasing a handgun, rifle, or shotgun from a non-dealer outside the state of residence. In addition, Federal law prohibits anyone from providing a handgun to a juvenile, and prohibits juveniles from possessing handguns, with limited exceptions.

Gun registries are prohibited by state and federal law. Background checks on private transfers create a de facto gun registry, infringing on our privacy and Second Amendment rights. They put undue pressure on rural Mainers who may not have easy access to federally licensed firearm dealers or the means to pay additional fees.

The current law requiring background checks for private sales will not prevent crime or tragedy. Repealing the current law restores freedom to the people of Maine while upholding the values of personal responsibility and constitutional rights. I urge you to support this repeal and allow law-abiding citizens to exercise their rights without unnecessary government interference.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Jennifer Poirier
State Representative