

**Jennifer Hicks**  
**District 5 Brunswick Town Council Member**  
**92 Merrymeeting Rd, Brunswick, ME**  
**[jhicks@brunswickme.gov](mailto:jhicks@brunswickme.gov)**

May 1, 2025

Good Afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the committee. My name is Jennifer Hicks. I'm a resident of Brunswick, Maine and I am here today as a member of the Brunswick Town Council. I am testifying in support of LD 1743, An Act to Allow Municipalities to Prohibit Firearms Within Their Municipal Buildings and Voting Places and at Their Municipal Public Proceedings.

LD 1743 permits a municipality to adopt a regulation to limit or prohibit the possession of firearms within its buildings and voting places and at municipal public proceedings within the municipality with logical exceptions (law enforcement officers) and non municipal parts of a building or users of the building. This bill is not a ban. This bill allows municipalities to adopt their own regulations, at their discretion, to limit or prohibit firearms resembling such limits and prohibitions that already apply to the State Legislature and courthouses, schools, hospitals, and colleges.

Matters that are considered and decided by municipal officials like me that affect citizens' personal lives can be contentiously opposed, raising concerns about safety. I have seen town-related public meetings become incredibly heated and at times, certain attendees have spewed hate-filled comments that I believe were meant to threaten public officials and the targets of their anger. A gun in their possession would have made that meeting exponentially dangerous and most likely deadly. After speakers made threatening comments during meetings in 2023 and 2024, the Town Council asked Brunswick Police to have an officer attend our Town Council meetings for added security measures. Thankfully, none of those meetings resulted in violence, however, a number of involved citizens stopped attending meetings in person because they did not feel safe.

Knowing that a municipality can restrict firearms and can have them confiscated if found and impose penalties on those who violate the restriction on firearms in a municipal proceeding would send an important signal to those who believe that gun violence is a way to address their disgruntlement. It would also empower municipalities to create another way to keep their public officials and citizens safe, and give residents a level of comfort to attend our meetings in person.

While LD 1743 doesn't solve all issues surrounding safety and civic involvement, this will go a long way to help our community take safety seriously. Thank you to my fellow Brunswick resident, Representative Poppy Arford, for creating this bill, and to this committee for considering this important issue.

Jennifer Hicks