

Testimony 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

Steven Weems, Town Councilor, Brunswick, Maine

To the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

May 1, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and other distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Steven Weems, one of nine town councilors in Brunswick. I arise today to support LD 1743 as an individual councilor, not specifically on behalf of the Town of Brunswick.

To be brief, this is a common sense bill with limited application, to protect people in settings where official municipal business is being conducted, with good guardrails and appropriate exceptions for law enforcement personnel. I do not think it is an unwarranted infringement on the rights of gun owners. It is a legitimate public safety measure.

Those of us living in Brunswick are pretty well-mannered, and our municipal proceedings generally have been orderly and non-threatening. There have been occasions, however, dating all the way back to the early 1990s in my personal experience, where we have been put on alert and the police department has sent officers to monitor our meetings, and protect the public. Life in general is more fraught now than then. Representative Arford's bill LD 1743 is a reasonable precautionary measure, given this reality. I urge you to support this initiative. It isn't taking the right to own firearms away from anyone. It is protecting participants in local government proceedings, where we need as much active participation as practical.