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May 1, 2025

Testimony of Rep. Matthew Beck 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**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Matthew Beck, and I have the privilege of representing the people of House District 122, part of South Portland.

I am here today to speak 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.**

Prior to the start of the 132nd Legislature, our legislative delegation from South Portland heard from our city officials that one of their top priorities was to be given the ability to adopt a local ordinance limiting firearms in municipal buildings and at polling places.

People openly carrying weapons into polling places on Election Day make some poll workers and voters very uncomfortable. During these politically polarized times when passions run high, the appearance of firearms when people prepare to cast their ballots can be very intimidating.

When I was attending a South Portland City Council meeting late last year, a city resident was angry about rising property taxes and was expressing that anger while open carrying a gun. This was deeply disturbing, both to members of the council and to members of the public who were attending the meeting.

I urge you to support LD 1743 to give our local governments the local control to enact ordinances to limit firearms in municipal buildings and at polling places. Local governments that prefer to maintain the status quo may continue to do so.

Please help our municipal employees and workers at the polls have some peace of mind with the knowledge that the only people lawfully carrying firearms will be members of law enforcement who are sworn to protect them. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

District 122: South Portland (Part)