

TO: Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee.  
FROM: Faith Barnes, LCSW  
DATE: June 11, 2025  
RE: LD 1378: An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act

My name is Faith Barnes, and I live in Brunswick. I am testifying in support of LD 1378: An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act.

I am a retired clinical social worker. I entered the field of social work due to my own bereavement experience resulting from the death of my sister. Bereavement is not an easy emotion to process. It is isolating, and the emptiness of losing a loved one is heartbreaking and never leaves you. Robert Card's family knew he was not well and in crisis. They did what they could to get him help, but without an extreme risk protection order (ERPO), which allows a family member to petition a court to temporarily remove access to firearms for someone deemed a danger to themselves or others, they were stuck. Imagine knowing that your loved one is in crisis and not be able to help them, to keep them safe, and to keep others safe. It is a burden that no one should have to bear.

- Maine's current law is not an ERPO law – it is the only law of its kind in the nation, disempowers family members from getting help and preventing tragedies, and failed to prevent the tragedy in Lewiston.
- ERPOs will allow both families and law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily restrict someone's access to dangerous weapons when they're in crisis.
- ERPOs have been used effectively to disarm people who threatened mass shootings, including school shootings.
- ERPOs have been proven to reduce suicide, the leading cause of gun death in Maine, particularly among men.
- Northeastern states that have ERPOs include Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Faith Barnes, LCSW