

Testimony of Annika Moltz, RN, BSN
To the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
132nd Maine State Legislature
June 11, 2025
Re: LD 1378

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Annika Moltz, and I live in Portland, Maine. I am here to respectfully testify in support of LD 1378: An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act.

I have worked as a registered nurse, both here in Maine and at hospitals across the country, for the past thirteen years. Among the medical histories I read every day, mental health diagnoses like generalized anxiety disorder, major depressive disorder, and bipolar disorder are as common as diabetes, hypertension, COPD - and yet the enormous majority of people with these diagnoses have no history of gun violence, towards themselves or others. This stands to reason, as mental illness is clearly documented as a poor predictor of gun violence.

Removing a firearm from the possession of people in crisis decreases their risk of committing harm to others, and reduces the risk of suicide, which is the leading cause of firearm death in Maine, especially among men. As we know in our own lives, families are often the first to recognize this kind of crisis developing in a loved one, and they are the most deeply motivated to protect them from harm. For months before the horrific shooting took place in Lewiston in October of 2023, the shooter's family tried repeatedly to get help for their loved one, utilizing the "yellow flag law" that is currently in place. This law, however, forced them to depend on outsiders to verify what they already knew: that their loved one was in crisis and needed their help. The consequences, of course, were tragic.

In order to reduce gun violence, we must align our laws with the most effective ways to protect our communities: we must trust and empower families to act to help keep their loved ones, and their communities, safe.

As a registered nurse and a very concerned member of this community, I offer my vigorous support of LD 1378.

Sincerely,

Annika Moltz, RN, BSN
Portland, Maine