

Good afternoon, Chairs Carney and Kuhn and members of the committee. My name is Margaret Martin and I'm a 16-year teacher in my 13th year at Lewiston High School where I teach Journalism and 10th grade English. I'm here today to express my support for a true Extreme Risk Protection Order law in Maine. As a teacher and a resident of Lewiston, I lived through the mass shooting on October 25th, 2023, and my community still remembers and still grieves.

I'm a Mainer who grew up around guns. Like many Maine families, my dad, my uncles, and my grandfathers hunted for deer and ducks. I have friends who hunt. Like many Maine hunting families, I grew up understanding that gun rights come with clear responsibilities.

As a teacher, I have a responsibility not only to ensure that our students are safe, but also to create an environment that's conducive to learning—that means one where our students don't fear the threat of gun violence at school, a fear that's commonplace for American teens. Every single day, walking into our building, we're all aware that we could be next. What a relief it would be to have a common-sense law that makes Maine schools safer.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders will give family members the power to seek help when a loved one is in crisis and may pose a threat to themselves or others. This law exists in nearly half the country, and has been used effectively to disarm people who threatened mass shootings, including school shootings. In just the first three months of Extreme Risk Protection Orders in Maryland the law was used to disarm four people who posed a threat to schools.

I know it might feel like the horrific school shootings that we see on the news in places like Parkland and Uvalde and Sandy Hook are impossible here, but we said the same thing before October 25th, 2023. My students can't wait for another tragedy before we do the responsible thing. Thank you.

6/11/2025