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Testimony in favor of LD 759

Senator Deschambeault, Representative Warren, and members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Peter Macdonald Blachly. I live in Bath and would like to speak in favor of LD 759.

I am not opposed to responsible gun ownership. My family was familiar with guns. I had my first air rifle at age 9, and my first 22 caliber rifle at age 11. In 1983 I underwent training as a security guard in Los Angeles, and was tested in marksmanship at the LA Police firing range.

My testimony is a little anecdote from when I was 11 years old. My oldest brother, who was 19 at the time, came back from a trip to Latin America with a 32 caliber Baretta automatic pistol, which he hid under his mattress. One day when I was home alone, I found the gun and picked it up. My finger was literally on the trigger and I was about to pull it to see what would happen, when I thought better of it. I pulled back the receiver and, to my shock and amazement, out popped a live shell!

I had never handled an automatic before and I was terrified to see that when I released the receiver another bullet was loaded into the chamber. Fortunately, I quickly figured out what was happening, and repeatedly pulled back the receiver until all the shells had been ejected and the clip was empty.

I am here today by the grace of God, and by pure luck, and maybe a little dash of intuition and common sense that snuck into my adolescent brain. This incredibly dangerous situation would never have developed if my brother's gun had been stored properly. I do not think that trigger locks were available back then, but they are now, and they should be used by all gun owners.

Please vote in favor of LD 759.

Thank you for your time.

Peter Blachly