

**Favor of LD 759, An Act to Amend the Child Endangerment Laws to Include  
Certain Unauthorized Access to a Loaded Firearm**

Good morning Senator Deschambault and Representative Warren and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Dr. Laura Blaisdell. I reside in South Portland. I have been a practicing pediatrician in Maine for 15 years. I attended University of Minnesota Medical School; completed my pediatrics training at the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center and I am currently the Vice-President of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

LD 759 asks firearm owners to make common sense efforts to keep firearms stored safely and out of children and teens hands. Reducing the access to means reduces accidental and suicide deaths. States with legislation that ensures safe firearm storage have seen decreases in their teen suicide rates.<sup>1</sup>

COVID-19 has heightened the risk of suicide for children and adolescents. Pediatricians and others who care for children can share with you the untold stories of how children are suffering silently in this pandemic. Youth suicides are heartbreaking, and even more so when they can so clearly be deterred by common sense laws about access to lethal weapons.

It takes a village to raise children, please join the village in supporting LD759.

Respectfully,  
Laura L Blaisdell MD/MPH, FAAP

<sup>1</sup>Webster DW, Vernick JS, Zeoli AM, Manganello JA. Association between youth-focused firearm laws and youth suicides. JAMA. 2004 Aug 4;292(5):594-601. doi: 10.1001/jama.292.5.594. Erratum in: JAMA. 2004 Sep 8;292(10):1178. PMID: 15292085.

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