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As a mother of two, a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for gun sense in American, and as one whose family has been irrevocably altered by the epidemic of gun violence I respectfully urge the committee to support LD 759 - The trauma and horror of gun violence is a life long sentence that no family should have to endure.

These are Maine headlines that should never have happened. It is the responsibility of the adults in the home to keep weapons and firearms secured and out of the reach of children and teens.

.Toddler fighting for her life after shooting at Bangor residence.

.Elise Dorr, 5, shot to death in Scarborough family home.

.8-year-old boy fatally shoots himself while handling father's gun in Maine.

.Boy accidentally shoots himself in hand with pistol in Pittston, Maine.

.Mt. Blue High School honor roll student from New Sharon was video-chatting with a friend, accidentally shoots and kills himself.

.Boy, 13 shoots himself while "playing with gun" in Lewiston

.Waterville 2-year-old in critical condition after being shot in the head.

.A 16-year-old was arrested Wednesday evening after a shooting incident on Orchard Road in West Paris.

.Milford family preaches gun safety after teen nearly struck by stray bullet

Sadly these headlines don't begin to tell the full story. Youth suicide by firearm is on the rise. It's estimated that nearly half of all Maine homes have at least one firearm, and those numbers have risen since the start of the pandemic. Easy access to firearms and impulsivity are significant factors in youth suicides. Attempts by gun almost always result in death. Children as young as 11 have been known to access firearms in their own home to take their own life. We must do more to protect our children from the public health crisis of gun violence.