

April 26, 2021

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and hard-working members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, thank you for your service and thank you for the opportunity to provide my written testimony in opposition to LD 1138, "An Act To Ensure the Right to Self-defense Exists outside the Home by Removing the Requirement To Retreat."

My name is Catherine Murray, and my family has lived in rural, urban and suburban areas of central Maine for 45 years. I care about my family and community. The laws you pass can help us or hurt us. I know you want to support safe, healthy, vibrant families and communities.

Please vote "ought not to pass" on this bill. It is unnecessary and dangerous. In Maine we already have significantly strong rights to self-defense and defense of our loved ones, both in our homes and in public.

Quoting from the current law:

Even away from our homes one can use deadly force if one "reasonably believes it necessary and reasonably believes such other person is: (1) About to use unlawful, deadly force against the person or a 3rd person; or (2) Committing or about to commit a kidnapping, robbery or [sexual assault]."

However, "a person is not justified in using deadly force if... The person knows that the person or a 3rd person can, with complete safety: (a) Retreat from the encounter..."

This caveat is a good thing. Of course we shouldn't kill someone if we know we can be safe without taking that step.

This bill removes the requirement to consider safe alternatives to killing someone.

This bill makes me feel less safe.

Please vote "ought not to pass."

Thank you.

Catherine Murray

Hallowell, Maine