

Dear Members of the Maine Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

My name is Janice Vance and I live in Kennebunk. I wanted to ask you to oppose LD 1138, the proposed Stand Your Ground bill. I have worked either full or part time for a half century. I have lived in three states, in multiple neighborhoods. I have traveled often for business, usually alone. And NEVER have I felt I needed to “defend myself” from someone who threatened me – to use the bill’s language -by “kidnapping, robbery or gross sexual assault.”

This is especially true in Maine, where we are told all the time – by certain members of our Legislature, in fact - that MAINE IS THE SAFEST STATE IN THE COUNTRY. In fact, every time legislation is proposed to require simple, common-sense regulations like universal background checks for gun purchases, locking up firearms to keep them away from children, or temporarily removing firearms from those who are at risk of suicide or domestic violence, we are informed – again, by certain Legislators - that there’s no need because MAINE IS THE SAFEST STATE IN THE COUNTRY. Has something changed recently? Does the author of this bill expect that we will begin routinely experiencing “kidnapping, robbery or gross sexual assault” and therefore each of us must be armed and hyper-vigilant each time we step outside to mow the lawn? Can he show us what statistics he is basing this belief on?

Statistics show* that gun violence rates are higher in every single state that has a Stand Your Ground law, because it allows men suffering from Chip on The Shoulder Disorder an excuse to consciously look for confrontation. Stand Your Ground laws don’t make us safer. They increase our crime rates.

We really don’t need a law that allows people to shoot their annoying neighbor and get away with it by claiming they feared he was going to kidnap them.

Members of the Committee, please oppose this ridiculous bill. Thank you for your time.

*<https://everytownresearch.org/report/stand-your-ground-laws-are-a-license-to-kill/>

Janice Vance
Kennebunk

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