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Thank you Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee for allowing me to submit testimony in support of LD 999 An Act Regarding Background Checks for the Sale of Firearms referred to as Darien's Law. I also thank Representative Rachel Talbot Ross for sponsoring this bill.

I am Edith Ames of Westbrook, Maine and I am also a grandmother who experienced the great loss of my first born granddaughter, Darien Richardson in 2010. Her violent home invasion and murder still unsolved to this day.

I am among the many concerned citizens of the State of Maine regarding the lack of background checks at gun shows and advertising in publications such as Uncle Henry's which gives people the ability to purchase guns knowing that they would not have to pass a background check.

It begs the question who needs to buy them that way - are they trying to get around not having a background check to ensure they are not a felon? If a prohibited person knows he will not pass a background check but still wants to have a gun they are completely able to purchase one this way. Why have two sets of rules in this state?

Please don't get caught up with the word twisting semantics of the gun lobby and those who follow them. Background checks are required only when a licensed dealer is the seller. The loophole is that no background check is required for sales made by unlicensed sellers, regardless of where those sales take place—at a gun show, in a parking lot, between strangers who met online, or anywhere else. This is a public safety issue. Let's do all we can to keep the guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. Let's save other families the trauma of losing a loved one to gun violence.

I strongly urge you to pass LD 999.

Respectfully,  
Edith Ames