



Maine Municipal Association

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

Neither For Nor Against

LD 1454 - An Act To Prohibit Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms

May 03, 2021

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am testifying neither for nor against to LD 1454 as directed by MMA's 70 member Legislative Policy Committee.

Municipal officials support creating standards in law that address concerns about the possession of weapons that skirt the legal standards and requirements for background checks and waiting periods created by new technologies that bypass federal firearms sellers most law-abiding gun owners expect and benefit from.

The ability to print a weapon from plans available on the internet mean that individuals who are prohibited from possessing a weapon have access to an alternative market that may not even involve a second party in a private sale.

However, enforcing access to downloadable plans spans multiple jurisdictions and requires advanced technological investigative services that are not available in local communities and places a higher burden on our state partners to monitor and investigate such actions. From the municipal standpoint, without investment in additional state level investigative resources, the law created will be a challenge to enforce.

The only point at which municipal police will be able to enforce the new crime will be after the possession is discovered. Additionally, under current law, municipal officials are unable to deter the possession of weapons on municipal property even during an election unless that polling station is located on school grounds or a private building that has prohibited such possession. As drafted, this will restrict the possession prohibitions on municipal property to just guns printed from a 3D printer and puts municipal officials in the position of determining the origin of such a weapon before it could be removed from the building.

To make this easier on municipal officials, the Association would advise the committee to either add language that restricts all weapons from municipal buildings or at least restricts weapons from the building on polling day as requested in LD 805 that is under consideration in

State and Local Government Committee. If that legislation passes, this bill could include an additional penalty if an individual attempted to bring a weapon into a polling station on polling day if the municipality passes an ordinance restricting guns from municipal buildings on polling day.

While it strikes municipal officials odd the municipal governments do not have same permissive authority as enjoyed by this legislative body, private landowners, corporations, Maine State government offices and public and private schools possess to restrict weapons from meetings year-round, unless the language is amended, it will be challenging to enforce.

For these reasons, municipal officials are neither for nor against LD 1454 and happy to work with stakeholders and the committee to find a workable solution to address the disparity between lawful and responsible gun ownership and new technologies that allow access to those with less regard for the responsibility that naturally accompanies a qualified right.