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Testimony of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in Favor of LD 1454 An Act to Prohibit Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms

More and more as a society we turn to the internet to solve problems- when an appliance breaks, you're not sure if your runny nose and itchy eyes need a visit to the doctor, and it turns out - if you might wish to obtain a firearm-even if you have been prohibited. Those motivated enough are able with an internet connection and access to a 3d printer to order up pieces in a kit; get directions for a 3D printer to print some of the components and in an afternoon - build their own AR-15. Additionally, 3-d printing allows for the manufacturing of entirely plastic firearms that can evade metal detectors. These 3d printers are more and more accessible in high school and college labs, shared maker spaces, and for a little over \$200, for purchase on Amazon.

Homemade firearms referred to as ghost guns, brought into existence without a serial number, are not traceable. Mass shootings have already been committed using these do it yourself devices. In the case of a mass shooting at Santa Monica College in 2013 and in a separate mass shooting at Rancho Tehama Reserve, California in 2017, both gunmen had been banned from purchasing firearms but had evaded the prohibition by ordering parts and assembling their own.^{1,2} In 2019 a man in Texas was arrested after he was detained with a partially 3d printed AR-15 and a list of lawmaker's names.³

The US has more firearms than citizens.⁴ Persons in need of the legal purchase of a firearm for sport or protection should have no trouble accessing one. Production of homemade untraceable firearms are designed to evade detection, enable the creator to skip a background check, and have demonstrated lethal outcomes. While action at the federal level regarding these issues is forthcoming, these changes will take time. Passage of LD1454 will regulate the production, transfer, and distribution of undetectable and untraceable weapons. Maine should act now to ensure the safety of its citizens.

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1Matt Stevens, "Santa Monica shooter left remorseful farewell note," Los Angeles Times, June 13, 2013, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-santa-monica-shooting-20130613-story.html>

2Andrew Blankstein and Corky Siemaszko, "California mass shooter made his own rifles," NBC News, November 16, 2017, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-mass-shooter-made-his-own-killing-machines-n821516>

3LaVendrick Smith, "Gunman arrested in Texas woods with 3-D-printed AR-15, 'hit list' of lawmakers gets 8 years in prison," Dallas Morning News, February 13 2019, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/courts/2019/02/14/gunman-arrested-in-texas-woods-with-3-d-printed-ar-15-hit-list-of-lawmakers-gets-8-years-in-prison/>

4.<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/06/19/there-are-more-guns-than-people-in-the-united-states-according-to-a-new-study-of-global-firearm-ownership>