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Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, I am Mary Owen, and I live in Augusta, Maine. I am writing in support of LD 1454, An Act To Prohibit Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms.

3D printed guns are effectively invisible to law enforcement – no background check, no serial number, and no way to trace the gun owner. They are a worldwide legal and security problem. Presenting an even greater threat to our safety are guns that can be purchased as a kit and self-assembled in less than an hour. Parts can be purchased online or at gun shows and are not classified as a firearm. They can be sold without a background check or serial number to identify the finished gun. We know these guns have been used to kill people.

We do not know how many ghost guns are in circulation in Maine, but other states have reported increasing numbers. According to an April 9, 2021, New York Times article, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reported that law enforcement recovered about 10,000 ghost guns in 2019 and the numbers are rising.

Ghost guns are the weapons of choice for criminals. Given the epidemic of gun violence in our country, it is irresponsible to leave these guns unregulated. We cannot wait until technology makes these weapons easier and cheaper to obtain. In the absence of federal leadership to address this threat to public safety, Maine must act to protect its citizens.