

Camilla Shannon
Yarmouth

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Cam Shannon. I live in Yarmouth. I am here today in support of LD 1454: An Act to Prohibit Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms. This bill would outlaw two distinct, yet similar, categories of unnecessary weapons favored by criminals and with no legitimate law-abiding use: ghost guns and 3D guns. Both pose a rising public threat.

Ghost guns are weapons assembled at home from kits available online. 3D guns are downloaded and printed at home using a 3D printer. Both lack a serial number. Both can be obtained without a background check, both are untraceable, and, in the case of 3D guns, undetectable by building and airport metal detectors.

The fact that neither ghost guns nor 3D guns can be traced poses a special problem for law enforcement. Typically when police recover a firearm, they use the serial number to trace the gun back to its original manufacturer, distributor, retailer, and purchaser - to get leads or evidence regarding the shooter. Without this critical information, law enforcement have one less tool for solving crimes.

Criminals, of course, know this. Drug dealers, human traffickers, and garden-variety violent criminals all have an incentive to use these weapons where law-abiding citizens would not. These guns make crime easier.

We have every reason to believe they will become more popular in Maine. According to a recent analysis by Giffords, "Today more than 40% of crime guns recovered by ATF agents in California are ghost guns." There is every reason to believe Maine will follow suit. The longer we allow these guns to flourish here in Maine, the more they will take hold.

Sadly, while we know these guns are being used in crimes, we lack accurate data about how many of them have been produced and by whom.

We do know from a report from Everytown that they are produced in at least 26 states and also, from their analysis of 114 federal prosecutions dating from 2010, more than 2,500 ghost guns were connected to criminal activity. We also know that the technology that supports the manufacture of these weapons is improving rapidly, making them easier and cheaper to produce.

President Biden has called for federal action to regulate these guns at the federal level, but any such action will take time to implement. We can and should act here in Maine, now. 3D printed guns, produced from plastic or resin, are undetectable. They can therefore be brought to sensitive locations - like the state house, a school, or a stadium - unnoticed. Let's not wait for tragedy to strike.

I am also here in support of LD 976: An Act to Amend the Definition of "Machine Gun" to Include Bump Stock Devices. As noted by others, bump stocks are attachments that capture the recoil on a long gun allowing it to fire at a rate equivalent to that of an automatic gun. They were banned by executive order following the Las Vegas shooting in October 2017. This executive order could be overturned by future administrations or the courts. By banning bump stocks in Maine, we protect our citizens in the event that federal law changes.

Please vote "ought to pass" on both of these bills.