

Dear Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Donna Stevens, I am a resident of Bath, Maine, and I am writing today to express strong support for LD 1052 "An Act To Protect the Firearm Use and Possession Rights of Maine Citizens during an Emergency"

LD 1052 would ensure the rights of law abiding citizens to exercise their right to keep and bear arms is not infringed by state and government officials during a state of emergency, because it would restrict those officials from negating the lawful sale, or use of firearms and ammunition during states of emergency, and would also prevent officials from closing gun stores and shooting ranges during those times.

When there is civil unrest, local law enforcement can become overextended in their capabilities to adequately respond in a timely manner to multiple calls for public assistance and in those times it's important that private citizens be able to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their homes/property from dangerous situations, individuals, or violent mobs.

Gun ranges and private gun clubs offer gun owners the opportunity to practice the safe and responsible handling and use of their firearms in training, so that in the unfortunate event we all hope never comes, when they would need to use them in defense of themselves or their loved ones from grievous bodily injury or death, they can do so with accuracy and efficacy to the extent required by the situation. Maine boasts being the safest state in the nation and government actions that interfere with a gun owner's ability to ensure their own safe use and possession of their firearms doesn't make any sense.

When Maine's current 13-month State of Emergency first was issued, gun ranges, private gun clubs, and FFL dealerships like stores that specialize in the sale of firearms and ammunition were forced to close until they were acknowledged nationally as "essential businesses" and were permitted to open back up.

Both the U.S. Constitution and Maine's Constitution guarantee law abiding citizens the right to keep and bear arms.

When government and officials force those stores, ranges, and clubs to close so that we cannot purchase firearms or ammunition, or practice training in the safe use of our firearms, then we are not only denied our right to keep and bear arms, but we are also potentially denied our right to defend ourselves and our loved ones from that which threatens to deny us our human right to life, and to be safe and secure in our bodies and our home/property.

I ask that you support this bill that affirms the Second Amendment Rights of Mainers during a declared State of Emergency and vote Ought to Pass on LD 1052.

Thank you for your time,
Donna Stevens