

April 7, 2023

Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: LDs 22, 60, 168

Dear Members of the CJPS Committee:

I write in emphatic support of LDs 22, 60, and 168. I implore you to take urgent action to advance these bills.

My daughter's 7th birthday is approaching, and all I can think about is the parents in Tennessee, Texas, Florida, Colorado, Connecticut - to name just a few - whose children will never celebrate a birthday again.

I close my eyes and see the bodies of dead children in a classroom. Bodies of children the same ages as mine that were so mutilated by bullets that their parents had to submit DNA samples to identify their babies.

When I was a kid, my parents worried about stranger abductions; about razor blades in Halloween candy or contaminated Tylenol. Baby Jessica fell down a well and it was news for months. Parents today send our kids to school feeling certain it's just a matter of time before a shooting happens in our neighborhood. (The playground of my kids' primary school abuts a road. I wonder how many children would be able to get away should a gunman drive up?) These massacres have become so commonplace that the news cycle moves on in days.

I am a gun owner, married to a gun owner, in an extended family full of gun owners, living in a state with a longstanding history of gun ownership. I respect Maine's sporting and hunting traditions. I too have waxed nostalgic about the days of rifles carried in the cabs of trucks for after-school deer hunts, and I believe in the value and importance of responsible gun ownership and teaching firearm safety.

But that's not enough anymore. The world has changed, the dangers facing our children have changed, and we need to change with them.

It was once said that "as Maine goes, so goes the nation." Let us uphold this tradition - and set an example for the rest of the country - by quickly and decisively acting to implement these reasonable, realistic, and necessary gun regulation measures.

Respectfully yours,

Sarah Boone
Scarborough, Maine