

Heather Keelty
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LD 551

Distinguished members of the criminal justice and public safety committee. My name is Heather Keelty and I'm a resident of Portland. I am a mother of two young children and although I have fortunately never been a victim of gun violence, seeing it in the news day, after day is wearing. I am strongly opposing Bill LD551 and believe this will make schools more unsafe. Research shows that when people are carrying firearms in public violent crime rates rise, we want to keep our family safe so gun should not be within 500 feet of school property where children are playing and learning. I want my children to grow up feeling safe from the stress of gun violence. Federal and state laws ensuring that schools are gun free zones help make K-12 school safer significantly reducing gun violence in these places, just look at the mass shootings as of the last few years. I don't want Maine Schools to be next on that list.