

Janice Vance
Kennebunk
LD 551

- Good morning, Senator Beebe-Center, Rep. Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Janice Vance and I live in Kennebunk. I am a member of the Maine Gun Safety Coalition, which raises awareness about the effects of gun violence. I urge you to NOT pass LD 551. I am absolutely opposed to the idea of changing the current law, which requires that no shooting take place within 500 feet of a school. (For non-school buildings, 300 feet is required.) The statistical chance that a person may need to defend himself by shooting at someone outside his home in what is one of the safest states in the country is so low that this is the proverbial "solution in search of a problem." If a person is so paranoid he wants to carry a gun while taking out the trash, he needs a mental health evaluation, not formal permission to shoot someone at will. This bill seems to be a back-ended attempt to enact a stand-your-ground law, also known as "shoot first and ask questions later," which encourages violence, has raised the murder rate in every state that now allows it, and absolutely should not be taking place near a school where kids, parents and school staff are outside throughout the day. Stray bullets have killed plenty of people who weren't the primary targets of a paranoid shooter. Thank you, and I hope you deny this bill.