



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Lori K. Gramlich presenting

LD 1392, An Act Directing the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention To Release Annually Public Health Data Regarding Certain Fatalities and Hospitalizations

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and distinguished colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Lori Gramlich, Representative for House District 13, which is the town of Old Orchard Beach. I am pleased to present **LD 1392, An Act Directing the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention To Release Annually Public Health Data Regarding Certain Fatalities and Hospitalizations**.

Normally, when I come before this committee with proposed legislation, I do so with data and statistics to support such proposed legislation. In this case, data is exactly what this bill seeks.

The intent of LD 1392 is to require the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the Commissioner of Public Safety, to release an annual report of public health data concerning firearm fatalities and injuries in the state of Maine. This report would be made annually to the Legislature and would be public.

Specifically, the information in this annual report would include public health data concerning firearm fatalities in the state, separated by: the number of homicides, including the number of homicides that were the result of domestic violence, further separated by the ages of the victims for each; suicides, further separated by the ages of the victims; accidents, further separated by the ages of the victims; and the type, make and model of firearm used in the above described incidents.

Additionally, data in this report shall also include accidents and hospitalizations that did not result in death but by which an injury was sustained. This information shall also include the type, make and model of firearm used.

This bill is needed because, currently, this information is not found elsewhere. Presently there is no central location to obtain all of this data. This bill requires DHHS to only report the data,

which exists elsewhere, in a single report, and for the Legislature and the public to receive it, much like the annual report we receive on opioid deaths in Maine.

To publish this information in an annual report would be helpful to inform the public about Maine's pervasive but under-reported gun violence problem by bringing attention to the issue of gun violence in Maine. We have heard the narrative that we don't have a gun violence problem in Maine, which may be due to the fact that gun deaths and injuries are not the result of street encounters but are rather the result of behind-closed-doors cases like suicides, accidental shootings and domestic violence homicides – tragedies that don't always make media headlines but are nonetheless significant and impactful.

Further, this bill will assist in developing a sensible approach to gun safety by examining the gun violence crisis in Maine and developing solutions from a public health perspective.

It is my intent and hope that the publication of this report will draw attention to firearm injury and death, which, in my opinion, is a public health issue that needs our attention.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I urge you to vote ought to pass for this critically important legislation.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions for you.