

To the Honorable Chair, Co-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding LD 1109. I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to the bill, and I appreciate your time and careful deliberation.

1. Existing Laws and Proper Enforcement

My chief concern is that criminalizing so-called “large-capacity ammunition feeding devices” will do little to address the root causes of gun violence. Maine already has laws that, if enforced diligently and uniformly, can help keep firearms out of the hands of individuals who pose a danger to themselves or others. Recent tragic events—such as the shooting in Lewiston—demonstrate that robust application and follow-through of existing statutes might have prevented violence. Instead of imposing yet another law, we should ensure that the tools we already have at our disposal are used effectively.

2. Potentially Criminalizing Law-Abiding Citizens

LD 1109 has the potential to transform responsible firearms owners into inadvertent violators. Many who lawfully own ammunition devices do so without malice, for legitimate reasons such as sport shooting or personal protection. Sweeping restrictions and bans risk branding these citizens as criminals when they have no history of violence or intent to break the law.

3. Better Police Training, Not Broader Laws

If the goal is truly to enhance public safety, we should invest in the resources necessary for comprehensive, ongoing law enforcement training. Officers and agencies must be equipped with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to use existing legal mechanisms properly—whether for background checks, intervention orders, or mental health referrals—instead of adding more regulations that may go unenforced due to limited bandwidth and training gaps. Put simply, if the system is already not being used to its fullest, expanding it does little more than overburden and complicate an underutilized infrastructure.

4. Focus on Root Causes

Gun violence is a symptom of deeper social and mental health challenges. Addressing mental health issues, bolstering community support networks, and ensuring that law enforcement agencies receive adequate funding and training would go much further toward preventing tragedies than a device ban that might only affect those who already follow the law.

Conclusion

I urge you to vote against LD 1109. Let us take stock of how we might properly employ and enforce the legislation on the books today, improve police training, and address the underlying contributors to violence. This approach, rather than broad prohibitions on hardware, holds far greater promise for ensuring community safety without burdening responsible Mainers.

Thank you for your dedication to serving the people of this state. I would be happy to discuss these matters further or answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Gallo

Maine Resident since Sept. '22

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