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LD 208

My name is Dana Russell, I am from Waterville.

I am testifying in favor of LD208 An Act to Eliminate the 72-hour Waiting Period on Firearm Purchases.

The 72 hr waiting period does not take into account that about 70% of all gun purchases are made by current gun owners. Not as many first-time buyers are going in to purchase a gun to commit suicide as you may think, the idea of just going into a gun shop to buy a gun you also need to learn enough to use it, a wobbly stool and a length of rope would be easier. And 70% of the rest of us don't need to buy a gun to do it as we have several to choose from at home.

Now consider domestic violence situations. The national average is over 40% of protection from abuse orders are violated within 18 months. This 72 hr wait leaves open a window for the violent partner to attack the victim. It is literally saying the victim is a gun free zone for 72 hrs, the most intense three days after the serving of the order.

Now let's talk about my situation and the many people like me. I am unable to walk so I use a wheelchair. To go anyplace I need to arrange with someone to transport me and my chair, not all of us can afford specialized vehicles. So, if I happen to be away from home any good distance and stop into a gun shop and see a firearm I want. I must be sure I can make transportation arrangements to get back after the 72 hrs. In as much as I cannot be sure I can get a ride back then my rights are being infringed, and I would say I am discriminated against because of my disability as the waiting period makes the purchase very difficult for me.