

Richard Shapiro
Brunswick
LD 1743

My name is Richard Shapiro, and I am from Brunswick. I am testifying in opposition to LD 1743.

Please oppose this bill.

The proposed legislation is not only unnecessary, as this remains the safest state in the country and our municipal employees have not been targeted, but is extremely ill advised, and will, in the real world, render our municipal buildings and voting places less safe.

I would like to remind the committee that 98% of mass shootings occur in “gun free zones”. Some people quote lower figures for this statistic, however those figures were achieved through the use of extremely broad definitions of “mass shooting” that include all gang violence and home invasions, neither of which have anything to do with the type of prospective victim or the type of crime relevant to this bill. The 98% figure is far more appropriate in the real world.

To clarify – there are two kinds of people who commit murders in places like these. The first is the would-be mass shooter. Research has conclusively and repeatedly demonstrated that these shooters, almost 100% of the time, will only strike where there is no perceived danger of armed opposition. I prefer, as would anybody who cares about the lives of our Maine citizens, not to increase the number of areas where such people might seek to strike.

The second type of prospective murderer, the person with a grudge, will utterly ignore such a law. Unless the state seeks to have all such new “unarmed victim zones” protected with metal detectors and a police presence this proposed law does only harm.

That leaves the third type of person who would carry a concealed firearm in such places - the law abiding citizen exercising his or her Constitutional right to keep and bear arms for self protection. And, in that light, I would further remind the committee that recent studies have, again, confirmed that, when law abiding citizens are carrying firearms, would-be murderers are FAR less successful in killing innocent people.

To summarize, overriding our state pre-emption law against local firearms ordinances here is not only unwarranted, but truly unwise.

To quote our Maine constitution, “Every citizen has a right to keep and bear arms and this right shall never be questioned.” It doesn’t say, except when in the vicinity of a municipal employee.

Please don’t allow a few people’s irrational fear of firearms in the hands of the law abiding to eliminate a substantial defense our municipal employees and voting area volunteers, not to mention voters, have against would-be murderers.

Thank you.