

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, Members of the State and Local Government Committee,

My name is Roberta Manter, and I live in Fayette. I am testifying in Opposition to LD 805. I am NOT a gun owner. I am not a member of any gun advocacy group. I don't even like guns. In fact, I have to admit that the mere sight of a gun makes me nervous. And I certainly make no profit from the sale of guns. HOWEVER, the more I hear about mass shootings and gun violence in general, the more I am convinced that the Second Amendment makes us safer, not more at risk.

I would feel far safer walking into a polling place, or any other public place for that matter, knowing that there are probably law-abiding citizens there who are carrying a firearm and know how to use it. Without that protection, I am convinced that there is a far higher danger of a person who has no regard for the law walking in and opening fire. If this bill were to become law, the person with intent to cause harm at a polling place will know that he can carry out his plans without resistance.

The media has worked hard to make citizens afraid of guns, and obviously they are being successful. But who are you more afraid of - the law-abiding gun owner who has no intent to fire his gun in a polling place, or the person who has no regard for the law and therefore will not be deterred by any sort of law or regulation that tells him he cannot bring his gun? If the former, then you have been duped. Do not let the media tell you what to think or how to feel. Look carefully at the statistics, and then make up your own mind.

The Constitution of the United States and of the State of Maine guarantee that the right to bear arms shall not be infringed. That's one of the reasons our country has never been invaded - it is widely known that we have a well-armed citizenry.

I don't know if you have heard the story of Suzanna Hupp, survivor of a mass shooting at a cafeteria in Killeen, Texas, in which both her parents were killed. Ironically, Hupp had had a handgun in her purse, but had taken it out that morning. If she had still had it with her, many lives might have been saved. (She has written a book, From Luby's to the Legislature.) Hers is not the only such story. There have been other incidents where someone carrying a gun HAS intervened and prevented further loss of life.

I heartily agree with the testimony of Brett Bulmer, so I won't repeat his arguments here.

In answer to Representative Tuell's question, I would not put the decision of whether to allow firearms in EITHER the hands of the Selectmen or the hands of the voters. We have a Constitution that says where that decision belongs - it belongs with the individual. The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that, "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." That applies to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. If the Constitution is not the supreme law of the land, then we have no law.

Thank you.