



CITY OF PORTLAND

To: Committee on State and Local Government
From: Kate Snyder, Mayor
Date: April 14, 2021
RE: Testimony in support of LD 805 (*An Act To Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Firearms at Voting Places*)

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack and distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government:

On behalf of the Portland City Council's Legislative Committee, I am testifying in strong support of LD 805.

This bill grants municipalities the ability to enable their citizenry to vote without fear of physical harm or intimidation - a Constitutional right that is fundamental to the operation of local, state, and federal governments.

I believe that each municipality should be given the opportunity to determine whether such a prohibition would accurately reflect its communities values and priorities. Currently, firearms are prohibited on public school property - presumably because the safety of our children is paramount. That prohibition helps parents and children to feel safe. Maine State government offices prohibit firearms year-round, presumably so that legislators and government employees need not fear violent retribution throughout the course of their diligent administration and policy-making.

I believe voters deserve to have that same confidence when casting their vote alongside poll volunteers and municipal staff - it ought to be the jurisdiction of a municipality to offer its residents the same sense of security afforded at the State House.

In summary, I ask that you vote in support of LD 805. Thank you for your time and consideration.