

Albert Stussy
Boothbay

Committee members,

My name is Cherie Wilder and I ask that you oppose LD805.

1) The idea of making people safer by creating gun-free zones is rooted in a fantasy where evil and deranged people can be stopped by a mere “no guns allowed” sign. Gun-free zones only provide the illusion of safety and dangerously signal to would-be criminals that they are unlikely to encounter effective resistance. In reality, it would make people less safe by stripping citizens of their right to self-protection.

2) It would violate Maine’s Constitution, which clearly states “Every citizen has a right to keep and bear arms, and this right shall never be questioned.” There is no exception for election day.

3) It would suppress voting. Thousands of law-abiding Mainers carry concealed handguns every day, and thousands more have rifles in their vehicles during deer hunting season. Election day takes place during hunting season. Many gun owners could be inclined to avoid going to the polls out of confusion over their local ordinances or fear of running afoul of the law.

4) It would violate preemption. Under Maine’s vigorous preemption law, individual cities and towns cannot make their own gun laws. This prevents Mainers from having to navigate a confusing and ever-changing patchwork of laws across the state. LD 805 is an attempt to chip away at preemption; this must not be allowed.

5) A number of both State and Federal laws already address the concerns being raised by supporters of LD 805:

- Title 17-A prohibits criminal threatening
- Title 25 prohibits the threatening display of a firearm
- Title 21-A prohibits interference with the free passage of individuals at the voting place
- Title 18 of the US Code contains a VERY strong prohibition against intimidation of voters

LD 805 is not about safety. It’s a bill rooted in fear, not facts, and is a blatant attack on our right to keep and bear arms. It’s unnecessary and doesn’t make sense for Maine.