

Testimony in Favor of LD 805:

An act to Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Firearms at Voting Places(Senator Breen-sponsor)

Distinguished Chairs Senator Baldacci and Representative Matlack and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify IN FAVOR OF LD 805-An Act to Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Firearms at Voting Places.

I will be frank that being in the presence of civilians who are carrying firearms while in a public space makes me feel unsafe. Given the ease with which one can obtain a gun without a background check, without any type of certification that they know how to handle the weapon they have, without any permit for concealed or open carry of a loaded firearm, and without knowing if the person has anger management issues or psychological issues, there are lots of potential problems. Faced with such a display of firearm(s) in the voting place would be dangerous and intimidating to most voters. My responsibility to practice my right to Freedom of Speech in the voting booth would be compromised. Those who bear arms in a public space rather than in the hunting grounds are knowingly using the weapon as intimidation. And intimidation at the voting booth is illegal. When carrying out our constitutional duty to vote, we should have a right to do so in a safe and secure environment. All municipalities should have the right to provide the most secure and safe environment for voting. I ask this committee to support LD 805 so that municipalities can decide to prohibit firearms at voting places.

Respectfully,

Gail Witherill
Cumberland Maine

Gail Witherill
Cumberland Center

Testimony in Favor of LD 805:

An act to Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Firearms at Voting Places(Senator Breen-sponsor)

Distinguished Chairs Senator Baldacci and Representative Matlack and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify IN FAVOR OF LD 805-An Act to Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Firearms at Voting Places.

I will be frank that being in the presence of civilians who are carrying firearms while in a public space makes me feel unsafe. Given the ease with which one can obtain a gun without a background check, without any type of certification that they know how to handle the weapon they have, without any permit for concealed or open carry of a loaded firearm, and without knowing if the person has anger management issues or psychological issues, or is just having a bad day, there are lots of potential problems. Faced with such a display of firearm(s) in the voting place would be dangerous and intimidating to most voters. My responsibility to practice my right to Freedom of Speech in the voting booth would be compromised. Those who bear arms in a public space rather than in the hunting grounds are knowingly using the weapon for intimidation. And intimidation at the voting booth is illegal. When carrying out our constitutional duty to vote, we should have a right to do so in a safe and secure environment. All municipalities have the right to provide a secure and safe environment for voting. I ask this committee to support LD 805 so that municipalities can decide to prohibit firearms at voting places.

Respectfully,

Gail Witherill
Cumberland Maine