

Thank you Chairs and Members of this Committee for your service to the people of Maine.

My name is Kathleen McFadden. I am the Maine Chapter Leader for Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, and I live in Gouldsboro. We have an epidemic of gun violence and death by guns on our hands in this country and in this great state. On average, one Maine resident dies by gun suicide every 3 days. This is unacceptable.

As one whose family has been impacted and irrevocably altered by the trauma and aftermath of gun violence, I am here to ask you to vote in favor of LD1312 so that other families are spared.

Isn't it time we started start supporting law enforcement and the families of those at risk? Family members and Law Enforcement are often the first to recognize threats and risks of harm. All too often, family members and law enforcement are faced with situations where they see warning signs and know "troubles a-brewing". And, all too often, they are forced to wait until a crime or tragedy occurs before action is taken. Maine has a chance to support families who seek help and support law enforcement by passing Extreme Risk Legislation (LD 1312) this session. Red Flag bills or Extreme Risk Protection Orders provide a legal pathway to intervene before a tragedy occurs.

This bill outlines rigorous due process including measures to prohibit harassment or false reporting.

An analysis of mass shootings from 2009 to 2017 revealed that in 51 percent of incidents the shooter exhibited warning signs that they posed a risk to themselves or others before the shooting. These warning signs are even more apparent among perpetrators of school\_violence. Mass shootings are not the only cases to be averted though. Maine has a suicide rate above the national average. Family member are often the first to recognize depression and despair in their loved ones, yet are helpless to seek intervention to temporarily remove firearms until after the unimaginable occurs.

Nobody argues that increased availability to mental health services is part of the equation, but neither is it the total solution. Let agree that the easy access to firearms in a time of crisis is simply not in anyone's best interest; the person suffering, family members who must helplessly standby, or law enforcement whose job it is to help and serve but have no means to avert imminent dangers or threats until it is too late.

I respectfully ask this committee to put school, public, and individual safety above politics and vote in favor of LD 1312.

Sincerely –

Kathleen McFadden

Maine Chapter - Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in American  
Gouldsboro, ME.