



TO: The Honorable Anne Carney
The Honorable Matt Moonen
Members of the Judiciary Committee

DATE: March 5, 2024

RE: An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Disposition of Forfeited Firearms

Good morning Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the committee, My name is Allyson Gardner. I'm a resident of Fryeburg and the Director of Maine Students Vote, our youth programs, for the League of Women Voters. I am testifying Ought to Pass on LD 2086.

Since 1990, the League of Women Voters has advocated for safer gun laws. Our organization stands behind data that shows the proliferation of semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. LWVME strongly supports the sponsor's amendment to include bump stocks and other conversion devices into the definition of "machine gun". The worst mass shooting in the United States was committed by an individual using an assault rifle fitted with a bump stock. The enhanced rapid fire of the gun allowed him to kill 60 people and shoot and wound 413 others. This is not a device we want in Maine.

We thank Senator Carney for this amendment and her leadership on gun safety in Maine, but we do not see this amendment as enough. With the expiration of the federal Assault Weapons Ban, in September 2004, our nation has seen a 183% increase in gun massacres.¹ Dozens of studies have shown that this ban worked. That leads me to ask this committee: why then, when this proven prevention method exists, are we not expanding this bill to include a ban on assault-style weapons?

I'd also like to personally thank Senator Carney for creating the original text of this bill. As a resident of Oxford County, where we have recently seen the misuse of state-stored forfeited firearms, the importance of this bill feels extremely relevant.²

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

1

<https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/dem/releases/studies-gun-massacre-deaths-dropped-during-assault-weapons-ban-increased-after-expiration>

2

<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2024/02/03/mainefocus/mainefocus-government/oxford-county-sheriff-may-committed-theft-joam40zk0w/>