



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

DATE: April 5, 2024

RE: LD 2283 - An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public

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Good morning Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable committee members,

My name is Allyson Gardner. I'm a resident of Fryeburg and the Director of Maine Students Vote, the youth programs for the League of Women Voters of Maine. I am testifying in support of LD 2283. I have been here before this session, and it's encouraging that legislators are responding to the need for a strong Extreme Risk Protection Bill. Since the early 1990s, the League of Women Voters has advocated for gun safety legislation.

Warning signs are often present when an individual is at risk of taking violent actions. Studies have shown that family members are often the first to observe these warning signs<sup>1</sup>. This bill offers family, household members, and law enforcement officers the tools to keep firearms away from a person who is thought to be in imminent danger of harming themselves or others. The advanced warning offers an opportunity to proactively intervene rather than waiting for a tragedy to happen. Currently, 21 states have some form of an Extreme Risk Protection Order. Studies in these states have shown that these bills have helped to prevent potential mass shootings, school shootings, suicides, and murders. We thank the speaker for focusing this bill on behaviors and not the false equivalence between mental health diagnoses and violence.

We also acknowledge that this bill will become a major tool to help prevent suicides. Research shows that 80% of people considering suicide give some sign of their intent,<sup>2</sup> and those signs are best detected by family members and loved ones. Firearms are uniquely lethal when it comes to suicide attempts with over 90% of suicide attempts with a firearm resulting in a fatality. In 2021, 132 Mainers completed suicide by using a firearm, and with Maine having the highest gun death rate in New England,<sup>3</sup> we see this bill as extremely important to give Maine families additional tools to support their loved ones.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I ask that you vote to Ought to Pass on this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-in-us-2000-2013.pdf/view>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm\\_mortality/firearm.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm_mortality/firearm.htm)

<sup>3</sup> In 2020 a total of 86% of gun deaths in Maine were by suicide. Maine CDC, Report Pursuant to 22 MRS, Ch. 256-A § 1425 (June 1, 2022), <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/8617>