



Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
March 26, 2025

In support of:

- LD 1120 An Act to Promote the Secure Storage of Firearms
- LD 1299 An Act to Prohibit the Unsecured Storage of Handguns in Motor Vehicles
- LD 1104 An Act to Limit the Liability of Persons Who Provide Firearm Hold Agreements
- LD 1174 An Act to Allow Gun Shops to Hold Firearms for Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and First Responders

In opposition to:

- LD 208 An Act to Eliminate the 72-hour Waiting Period on Firearm Purchases
- LD 1230 An Act to Abolish the 72-hour Waiting Period for a Gun Purchase
- LD 1062 An Act to Eliminate Background Checks for Private Sales of Firearms

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Committee,

I am Rev. Jane Field, Executive Director of the Maine Council of Churches, a nonprofit coalition of seven mainline Protestant member denominations that have more than 400 congregations in Maine with over 50,000 parishioners in their care.

The central value of love of neighbor grounds the work of the Council, and we take seriously the biblical imperative to **protect the vulnerable and hold those who harm them accountable**. It's because of these core values that the Council supports passage of LD 1120, 1299, 1104, and 1174 and opposes passage of LD 208, 1230, and 1062.

Maine's faith leaders and the congregations they serve know far too well the trauma and grief of losing loved ones to gun violence. We pray for and stand in solidarity with survivors and declare our support for those who still struggle in the face of trauma and grief. And we are clear: **it is time to reclaim our homes, streets, schools, and workplaces from the threat of gun violence**, and it is time to take back our power to create safe and peaceful communities—to **reclaim it from the narrow special interests** that seek to block even modest, common-sense measures to prevent gun violence and promote gun safety and responsible gun ownership.

Four of the bills before you today—LD 1120, 1299, 1104, and 1174—help to accomplish these life-saving goals. The other bills before you would do the opposite, would make our homes, streets, schools, and workplaces less safe and more vulnerable to the scourge of gun violence.

Policy experts will provide you with the technical and legal specifics on how **safe storage of firearms, limiting liability of those who hold firearms, and allowing gun shops to hold firearms for veterans and first responders can and will keep Mainers safer by reducing gun violence in our state**.

You will also hear compelling arguments about how **eliminating the 72-hour waiting period for firearm purchases and eliminating background checks for private sales of firearms would jeopardize Mainers' safety**. It would represent a devastating **loss of the hard-won advances we made just last year** in passing landmark legislation requiring 72-hour waiting periods and background checks. **Mainers are counting on you to hold the line and keep us safe by rejecting these attempts to take us backward**.

We in the faith community are here to **speak to the moral imperative** of saving lives with sensible gun safety laws, and we are here to condemn our culture's idolatrous fascination with weapons designed to take human life in acts of mass shooting that leave people slaughtered, families shattered, and communities devastated.

As part of our faithful commitment to creating a more peaceful world, today we are imploring you to **take action to turn our state from the path of fear, death and destruction caused by gun violence. We are asking you to vote Ought To Pass on LD 1120, 1299, 1104, and 1174, and to vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 208, 1230, and 1062**.

*Episcopal Diocese of Maine, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA),
Religious Society of Friends, Unitarian Universalist Association, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church*