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Senator Keim, Representative Moonen and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am Senator Rebecca Millett, representing the South Portland, Cape Elizabeth, and part of Scarborough. I am here today to speak in favor of LD 1884, "An Act To Create a Community Protection Order To Allow Courts To Prevent High-risk Individuals from Possessing Firearms."

For years now we have all watched the news in horror and with our hearts breaking as we hear over and over again about gun violence incidents in our schools. From Columbine, to Virginia Tech, to Sandy Hook, to Parkland, and all the others, we have seen the tragic news stories, wondering which kids would be the next to have to hide in their classrooms or run for their lives, which teachers would be the next ones lauded and mourned for sacrificing themselves for the safety of their students, who would be the next mother to receive a text saying "in case I don't survive, know that I love you," and who would be the next lawmaker to let down her constituents by not taking action when they demanded it.

Today I stand here as a parent and a lawmaker on behalf of all the students, the families, the educators who want us to do something. Who want us to ensure that schools are the place of learning, exploration, and growth that they're meant to be, rather than the place of violence, of fear, that they have become. I cannot stand idle and let there be one more school shooting on my watch and know that I did nothing.

This bill may only be one part in a multi-pronged approach to solving the problem of gun violence in our schools and our society more broadly. But it is a critical aspect of that overall work. Too many times we've heard that people had some concerns about a school gunman. And maybe this bill wouldn't have stopped every one of them. But if it stopped just one. If it saved just one teacher's life, one child's life, it would be worth it to have passed it. That's why I urge you to support this bill so that we as a society have another tool to protect our students from harm, domestic violence victims from fatal harm, and our friends and neighbors from self-harm. Thank you.