



Janet T. Mills  
GOVERNOR

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AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

September 6, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin, III  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin:

As you know, on October 25, 2023, 18 people in Lewiston, Maine were killed and many more were physically and emotionally injured in a senseless act of violence that shook the State of Maine and our collective sense of safety to the core. As you also know, the shooting was committed by a U.S. Army Reservist.

I deeply appreciate the U.S. Army Reserve's AR 15-6 investigation as well as the U.S. Army Inspector General's subsequent review. These are important contributions to a larger discussion about how we, as policymakers, can work together to help prevent future tragedies from occurring. Following the release of the investigation and review, Maine's Congressional Delegation wrote to express their desire to see the recommendations of the investigation implemented.

Today, I am writing to express my desire also to see also these recommendations fully implemented and to request an update from the Defense Department on the status of their implementation.

I agree with Maine's Congressional Delegation in their July 23<sup>rd</sup> letter that the recommendations, if followed, "will benefit the Department of Defense as it provides care for service members". I want you to know I support these recommendations and believe they will help enhance the care and support of servicemembers and help prevent future violence. As such, I hope to see them fully implemented. Can you please provide me with an update on the status of the Defense Department's efforts to implement them?

Secondly, I want to convey my personal support for forthcoming Federal legislation being drafted by U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King to direct the military to take full advantage of state crisis intervention programs, such as Maine's Extreme Risk Protection Order law. Providing the military this authority will equip them with another tool to address potentially dangerous situations among its personnel, with the goal of preventing potential violence. I hope the Defense Department will serve as a productive partner in the consideration of this legislation and will advocate for it to become law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills  
Governor

CC: U.S. Senator Susan Collins  
U.S. Senator Angus King  
Congresswoman Chellie Pingree  
Congressman Jared Golden  
The Honorable Christine Warmuth, Secretary of the Army



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