

**MAINE CITIZENS AGAINST HANDGUN VIOLENCE  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
PROTESTEASYGUNS.COM & THE BRADY CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE**

For News Media Planning Purposes

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**ON A FATEFUL ANNIVERSARY, A DEMONSTRATION AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE TO URGE  
COMMON SENSE GUN LAWS**

**Portland, ME** – On Wednesday, April 16, the anniversary of the terrible tragedy that took 32 innocent lives at Virginia Tech University, USM students and other concerned citizens will lie down in silence at the USM Portland campus in remembrance of the lost lives and to encourage us all to reflect on the consequences of the excessive proliferation of guns in our culture, and weak gun laws.

Portland’s demonstration will be one of more than 80 lie-ins across the country as part of a National Lie-In protest of lax U.S. gun laws. Protesters– mothers and fathers, gun violence victims, college students and citizens of all ages – will lie down in honor of the 32 innocent victims and the 32 Americans murdered by guns every day in the United States. They’ll stay lying for about three minutes to illustrate the typical length of time it takes to purchase a gun in the United States.

Abigail Spangler founder of ProtestEasyGuns.com started these “lie-in” protests following the Virginia Tech tragedy last year, and has dubbed April 16 as National Lie-In Day. “We refuse to accept that nothing can be done,” Spangler said. “We’ll keep making our voices heard until we pass laws that make our children and our communities safer.”

“The American people know that it’s too easy for dangerous people to obtain dangerous weapons,” said Paul Helmke, President of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, a cosponsor of the April 16 national activities. “As we remember gun violence victims on April 16, we should urge Congress to close the gun show loophole immediately, and take other common sense steps to fight gun violence.”

According to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence website, the State of Maine does not require background checks at gun shows or through private sales. “This is the second time that Maine citizens have participated in a National Lie-In to protest weak gun laws.” said Bonnie Blythe, executive director of Maine Citizens Against Handgun Violence, who worked with a team of USM students to organize the campus event. “Last August, 32 people laid down in Monument Square for a National Day of Protest Against Illegal Guns. This time, we are here for the students.”

The details on next Wednesday’s demonstration:

**WHAT:** “Lie-In” To Urge Congress to Close the Gun Show Loophole  
And For More Common Sense Federal and State Gun Laws

**WHEN:** **12:00 Noon**  
Wednesday, April 16, 2008

**WHERE:** **Luther Bonney Quad/Lobby**  
**USM Portland Campus**

*Maine Citizens Against Handgun Violence* was formed in 1999 by former Bath Iron Works CEO Buzz Fitzgerald, former State Senator Chellie Pingree, and attorney William Harwood in response to the shootings at Columbine High School. MCAHV works for gun violence prevention by raising public awareness, advocating for personal responsibility, practical legislation, and increased manufacturer responsibility. For more information, visit our website at [www.mcahv.org](http://www.mcahv.org).

*ProtestEasyGuns.com* is a grassroots lie-in protest movement that emerged last year in response to the deadliest shooting rampage in U.S. history at Virginia Tech. Supporters are outraged at how easy it is to obtain a gun in the United States and believe it is time to change lax U.S. gun laws that allow criminals and dangerous individuals easy access to guns. Each of the protests includes 32 individuals (symbolizing the number of students and teachers murdered at Virginia Tech and the 32 Americans murdered with guns every day in the United States). Protesters lie down silently for three minutes (signifying the brief amount of time it takes to buy a gun in the United States). The goal is to encourage like-minded citizens to stage their own protests around the country to influence the public discourse and ultimately the legislative process with regard to this critical national problem. Visit [www.protesteasyguns.com](http://www.protesteasyguns.com)

As the nation's largest, non-partisan, grassroots organization leading the fight to prevent gun violence, the **Brady Campaign**, with its dedicated network of Million Mom March Chapters, works to enact and enforce sensible gun laws, regulations and public policies. The Brady Campaign is devoted to creating an America free from gun violence, where all Americans are safe at home, at school, at work, and in our communities.

For continuing insight and comment on the gun issue, read Paul Helmke's blog at [www.bradycampaign.org/blog/](http://www.bradycampaign.org/blog/). Visit the Brady Campaign website at [www.bradycampaign.org](http://www.bradycampaign.org).

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