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*Keeping Knives in
American Lives*

WWW.AKTI.ORG

March 4, 2015

Representative Joel R. Stetkis
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-002

VIA EMAIL: Joel.Stetkis@legislature.maine.gov

Dear Representative Stetkis:

The American Knife and Tool Institute (AKTI) welcomes your request for further input from the knife manufacturers and retailers. AKTI is primarily composed of the various knife and cutlery manufacturers. Board of Regent members include: Acme (Camillus), Buck Knives, Benchmade Knife Company, CRKT, Gerber, SOG Knives & Tools, Ontario Knife Company, Taylor Brands and W.R. Case. A number of retailers, purveyors and other manufactures are also members including Cabela's, KnifeCenter, A.G. Russell, Swiss Army, Microtech, Browning, Lansky Sharpeners, etc., as well as custom knifemakers and individuals.

AKTI wholeheartedly supports LD 264. We asked our counsel, Daniel Lawson, to appear for the committee hearing on March 2nd. AKTI and its members were represented at that hearing when Mr. Lawson spoke in support of the Bill.

The assertion that "switchblade" or automatic knives are intended or suitable only for criminal purposes is absurd. How a folding knife is opened does not control how it will be used. It is not criminal to seek convenience or ease of use.

Our members who are engaged in producing knives are constantly striving to improve the quality and performance of their products. Our retail sector members seek the ability to satisfy market demand. All of our members support the laudable goal of public safety. We would not support this measure if there was any reason to believe it would be detrimental to public safety or expose law enforcement officers to any



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increased risk. We are extremely confident that there is no correlation between knife laws and crime rates across the country. This confidence is based on, among other things, Uniform Crime Reporting data as collected by the FBI.

Over the last decade "switchblade" sale and possession laws have been repealed in 8 states. In Oregon, the statutory prohibition was found to be un-constitutional. None of these states have experienced a discernible increase in crime rates as the knives became available.

AKTI is committed to public safety and the wholesome use of man's oldest tool.

We welcome any question from those who would oppose LD 264.

Sincerely,

Jan Billeb
Executive Director