

To the members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony, I'll be brief.

On October 25th 2023 a tragedy occurred in Lewiston, a tragedy that should not have occurred with the current Yellow Flag law on the books, but it did. From what I understand there were several opportunities from the State mental health services, the Sagadahoc County Sheriff's Dept. and our U.S. military to prevent this event. However, none of them seem to follow through. What is the purpose of passing common sense laws when they are not enforced? Instead, there is now discussion about restricting my Constitutional rights, because somehow I and thousands of other Mainers are to blame for the inaction of our State mental health services and law enforcement.

These tragic events took place in a "Gun Free Zone", I guess the gunman did not see the sign on his way in, maybe the signs need to be larger.... However, many law abiding citizens who would normally have carried a firearm, did not. They adhered to the "sign", and followed the "law". How foolish is this? When will legislators learn that criminals DO NOT adhere to your laws and regulations? Instead we see around our country, schools and businesses that are attacked in a so called "Gun Free Zone". You are setting up "soft targets", as they are called. Sadly, like shooting fish in a barrel. Is this truly what you want for our country and state? I don't think it is. Had there been one, two or more citizens in that first facility with firearms this event may have turned out differently.

Our Democrat Governor is currently allowing thousands of illegal immigrants into our once safe state. That right there should scare you. Statistically, Maine is the safest in the nation, or was. The Governor's goal is 75,000 illegal immigrants in the next 5 years, we haven't had that many people relocate to our state in the last 24 years (The Maine Wire, Maine Governor Wants to Resettle 75,000 Foreign-Born Migrants in Maine by 2029, 8/23/23), **This is crazy beyond belief!** Aside from the financial burden she is placing on the state taxpayers, she is pushing aside true Maine citizens who are already in a tough situation and giving their benefits to illegal immigrants. However, that is a whole topic for another discussion. My point is simply this, who are these people coming into our country and state? I truly believe that there are many seeking a better life and are good honest people. However, there are many who are not!! What are you going to do when some of these illegal immigrants start forming ethnic gangs? I'm sure they already are. What are you going to do when they start terrorizing Maine citizens? And they will. Are **YOU** going to protect myself and my family and the thousands of other Mainers? What about the drug problems that will spill over into once safe neighborhoods? We currently have illegal Chinese immigrants with Marijuana grow houses! **How is that even possible?!** This action by our Democrat Governor is going to create an unsafe environment throughout the state the likes of which you have never seen! We, as Maine citizens, WILL possibly be put into situations that I never thought I would see in my lifetime and it's coming to a small town near you. Now you are talking about restricting our right to personal protection because the state agencies and others dropped the ball. Do you feel safe living next to one of the overflowing illegal migrant hotels in the state? How do you think the people who are forced to live there feel? Every day I hear a new story of a rape or murder somewhere in the country by illegal immigrants. Do you think it won't happen here??

The events of October 25th, 2023 and the tragic way so many lives were lost will be remembered forever here in our state. However, I urge you to see the bigger picture of the potential violence we have ahead of us as a community. I can honestly say, many Mainer's slept with a firearm next to their bed that night. And yes, some were the same type firearm that were used to cause so much death and destruction earlier that evening. As citizens, we certainly don't want to live that way, but we have the constitutional right to do so when necessary, with any firearm of our choosing to protect our families. Don't hobble us. You would not want someone taking away your right to protect your family by whatever means you felt necessary. It's not the firearm, it's the person holding it and for what reason. If a crazed person drove a car through the balloon festival and killed as many, would you ask that cars be limited in design or availability? Maybe ban them all together?? Of course not.

There are many outside paid influencers that like to get on busses in other states and come here and scream. You, as elected Maine representatives, have no business listening to, or taking advice from these outside organizations. They have an agenda. Don't be that representative that bends to outside influence.

In closing I would like to remind you of our Second Amendment:

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Note, it says "shall not be infringed", that's all you need to know in making this, or any future gun legislation. I urge you to please vote against any further gun restrictions against law abiding citizens.

Thank you,

Paul St.Pierre

Minot, Maine