

To: Members of the Judiciary Committee.

Subj: LD 2119 An Act to Support Suicide Prevention by Allowing the Voluntary Waiver of Firearm Rights

My name is Craig Caffrey of Bowdoinham ME and I have submitted this testimony in strong OPPOSITION to LD 2119 An Act to Support Suicide Prevention by Allowing the Voluntary Waiver of Firearm Rights.

If the Sagadahoc County Sheriff, Joel Merry, did his job and initiated the “Yellow Flag Law,” we wouldn’t be having this discussion. Yet, Sheriff Merry, a Democrat, failed in his duties to adequately safeguard the citizens and bring Mr. Card in for observation, mental health review and treatment.

Suicide is tragic, heart wrenching and painful to those left behind wondering what happened and why. I severed my country close to twenty-one years and it’s beyond painful to say that I know 14 service members that I served with that have taken their lives. Out of those fourteen, only two were by guns. The rest involved a bottle of government issued pills, large quantities of alcohol, rope, knife and driving at a very high speed into a stationary bulwark or, a combination of said items.

At the end of this month, it’ll be the fourth anniversary of the “two weeks to flatten the curve” that Togus shut down the PTSD group sessions at Togus. Since then, there has been a very limited reopening of these groups and a long waiting list. Where is the support to those sent out into the cold without a plan or support? When contacted, I also get the same reply from the VA, they need to hire more counselors. Why the delay?

We don’t need more laws that play “gotcha” or hinder law-abiding citizens that need help. We need to be encouraging those who might need to help to seek out family, friends, clergy, or medical professionals.

Lastly, I feel the need to include the following in order call out the Anti-Gun Legislation and supporters to show how not only did the system failed, but how all this could have been prevented if Sheriff Merry did his job and enacted the “Yellow Flag Law.” The Concussion Legacy Foundation (CLF): “Robert Card had evidence of traumatic brain injury. In the white matter, the nerve fibers that allow for communication between different areas of the brain, there was significant degeneration, axonal and myelin loss, inflammation, and small blood vessel injury. There was no evidence of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE),” said Dr. McKee, director of the BU CTE Center. “These findings align with our previous studies on the effects of blast injury in humans and experimental models. While I cannot say with certainty that these pathological findings underlie Mr. Card’s behavioral changes in the last 10 months of life, based on our previous work, brain injury likely played a role in his symptoms.”

<https://concussionfoundation.org/news/press-release/family-of-Robert-Card-II-releases-findings-of-his-brain-tissue-analysis-in-effort-to-prevent-future-tragedies>

I strongly encourage this committee to vote “OUGHT NOT TO PASS” on LD 2119 An Act to Support Suicide Prevention by Allowing the Voluntary Waiver of Firearm Rights.

Thank you for your time,

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LD 2119

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