

April 4, 2024

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am submitting this letter in support of Speaker Ross's proposed LD 2283: An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public.

My name is Daniel Lynch. I am a retired US Navy Captain with over 30 years of service in both the US Marine Corps and US Navy with multiple command tours of operational units. Throughout my career, I received recurring training in a variety of firearms and had occasion to carry a firearm while flying combat sorties over Afghanistan.

During my career, during times of duty as well as off-duty, I and many of my colleagues and friends had access to or owned firearms. We were always cognizant of the safe storage and handling of those firearms as well as the mental and social status of each other. At times we held informal discussions as well as periodic formal reviews of human factors that might cause an individual to be in a period of crisis, resulting in an individual harming themselves or others, either purposefully or otherwise. We also encouraged "open door discussions" where an individual or a colleague could bring up concerns of their handling a firearm.

These actions were undertaken with the goals of increasing safety and enjoyment with the access, ownership, and use of firearms. Our concerns were based on studies showing that unfettered access to firearms correlated to increased suicide rates as well as the common sense that delays in access to firearms would likely reduce firearm violence against others by adding a time buffer upon ability to act upon it.

Once retired, I began participating in competitive and instructive shotgun shooting. As a result, I have continued my association to those who use and have access to firearms. My colleagues and I continue to review each others' ability to safely own and use those firearms, albeit informally now.

I believe in an effort to create a comprehensive public health and public safety approach to gun violence prevention, enacting this "red-flag" bill would be a critical tool that would reduce our country's increasing gun violence as well as the oft-quoted statistic of 22 veterans committing suicide each day (though according to the VA, the actual number is closer to 18 a day with 13 by firearms*).

In closing, I wish to thank you for consideration of my testimony.

Very respectfully submitted,
Captain Dan Lynch, US Navy (ret)
Freeport, ME 04032

*2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, VA Suicide Prevention, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention