

Testimony of John Jaques

Gun violence is a plague on American society.

A Red Flag law is another step in the right direction, thanks to all the sponsors. Statistics clearly show that mental health is declining, and the lack of health insurance is a major barrier to treatment for many.

Mass shootings have become commonplace, and access to automatic weapons only increases the death toll. The tragedy in Lewiston was a wake-up call for many Mainers, myself included. Gun violence can strike anytime anywhere. Statistics also show that suicide rates are higher with easy access to guns. The Second Amendment to the Constitution mentions specifically the word “regulated”. Full and easy access to weapons is not a “well-regulated militia”.

According to CDC statistics, the top three states with the most gun deaths per capita are Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama. These are also among the states with the lowest gun regulations and lowest education rates. According to the Harvard School of Public Health. The nine states that rank lowest in terms of gun prevalence are the very same nine that rank lowest for suicide rates.

Guns need to be taken away swiftly in times of crisis. Your job is to regulate with effective legislation. Twenty-two states already have Red Flag laws on the books. Maine should join the list of states with Red Flag laws.

Please pass a more comprehensive true extreme risk protection order. Maine deserves better.

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