

Testimony shared on Friday April 5, 2024 with the Maine State Judiciary Committee

Note: I did not have power to print 20 copies in advance of the public hearing; during the hearing I promised to share the sources of data I cited. Here is the testimony with the sources!

Thank you, Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Anne McBride from Brunswick, and I am here to testify in favor of LD 2283, the Crisis Intervention Order Act. By enacting this legislation, Maine will add a critical tool for families and communities to help keep loved ones safe during a crisis.

As someone who works with and cares about young adults, I have seen the rise in anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns intensifying over the last 5-10 years and not appearing to decrease after the peak of the pandemic. This crisis has deadly consequences: a survey of college counseling centers, found 30% of schools experienced at least one student suicide in a one-year period.ⁱ

Firearms account for 55% of suicides (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ⁱⁱ) and 100% of mass shootings, as in Lewiston last year. We must find a way to help protect people in crisis and those around them by eliminating access to firearms *during the crisis period* without stigmatizing mental illness.

Enacting LD2283 to allow true Extreme Risk Protection orders is an essential step to safeguarding our friends, families, and communities throughout Maine. These orders help people get the support they need to recover: In Connecticut, nearly one-third of respondents received critical mental health and substance abuse treatment as a result of an extreme risk law intervention.ⁱⁱⁱ

I therefore urge you to help our communities by advancing and enacting LD2283 and I thank you for allowing me to speak with you.

ⁱ Counseling and Wellness Services, Bowdoin College. "Resources: For faculty and staff" <https://www.bowdoin.edu/counseling/resources/for-faculty-and-staff/index.html> [Accessed 4 April 2024]

ⁱⁱ US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Suicide data and statistics" <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-data-statistics.html> [Accessed 4 April 2024]

Other key information on this page:

- Suicide rates in the US increased 37% between 2000-2018 .
- In 2021 there were over 48,000 suicides--1 death every 11 minutes.
- Maine loses 227 of every 100,000 people per year to suicide, the 17th highest rate in the US.

ⁱⁱⁱ Swanson, J. W., Norko, M. A., Lin, H. J., Alanis-Hirsch, K., Frisman, L. K., Baranoski, M. V., et al. (2017). Implementation and effectiveness of Connecticut's risk-based gun removal law: Does it prevent suicides? *Law and Contemporary Problems*. 80(2), 101-128. (middle of second full paragraph on p. 193)