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Rumford
LD 179

Hello, I am a Nurse Practitioner practicing here in Rural Maine, also a survivor of domestic violence. I am also a mother to 5 children who also endured emotional abuse at the hands of my abuser of 27 years. Furthermore my abuser was charged with 33 counts, 1 which is considered a felony, 9 are domestic violence crimes including terrorizing, 7 violations of a PFA and this does not mention the harassment charges and his violations of conditions of release and today he gets to plea guilty to only 1 Class C -DVA, 1 class D VPFA, and 1 Class C DV Terrorizing and then 2 counts of Class E VC of release with a deferred judgement. I do not understand how this happens and how the court allows these things to happen.

My abuser had violated his conditions of release 13 times from February 13, 2022, to July 25, 2022, and sustained no meaningful consequences. He has had two more charges and has yet to be brought to justice for this, He has had two active warrants in the system since April of 2024 and is yet to be apprehended. I strongly urge you NOT to approve LD179.

I participate and support the work of Finding Our Voices as this was the only group where I found support in times of desperation when I felt as if I was being treated as only a docket number, a faceless victim.

Time and time again, you read in the news and hear on the local media about charges being dismissed for domestic violence, terrorizing, stalking, and domestic assault. Many are repeat offenders, and their charges are also coupled with drug charges and weapon charges. This not only places their victims at risk, but it also places law enforcement, first responders, and the community in a very dangerous situation.

This is exactly how cases such as Leein Hinkley 43, had been in custody on a probation violation related to his conviction in 2011 of domestic violence and elevated aggravated assault, as well as a recent domestic violence arrest. However, he was released by a district court judge after a court lowered his bail to \$1,500 with conditions, including house arrest at a Lewiston residence. Less than 72 hours later, he tried to break into the home of his former girlfriends home just before 1 a.m. Saturday, and got into a fight with a man inside, resulting in a standoff with the police, setting a fire that destroyed the former girlfriends home and a neighboring house. The man inside he confronted died in the fire. He was previously sentenced in 2011 to 20 years in the double stabbing of his former girlfriend in front of their 14 month old child and a person who attempted to intervene. His domestic violence history stems back to 2001. Leein Hinkley was shot and killed during the standoff with the police on June 15, 2024. (

https://www.yahoo.com/news/maine-top-judge-defends-judges-223400602.html?fr=yhssrp_catchall.

<https://www.wbur.org/news/2024/06/17/auburn-maine-gunfire-house-fire-lewiston>

Gaudreau, 60, virtually attended a hearing in Oxford County Court Wednesday around 1 p.m., facing a murder charge. “The Oxford County Sheriff’s Office responded to the area of 106 Auburn Rd. in Peru — also known as Route 108 — around 7:10 p.m. Tuesday for reports of a crash. Callers told law enforcement a gun was fired from a truck into a car. Gaudreau had called several family members and told them he shot his wife, she was later identified as Dale Gaudreau, 59. This occurred on May 28th, 2024. No trial has been set yet. This case is especially close to me as she was a colleague of mine and friend. We have worked together for 15 years of my 17 year career in healthcare.

Robert Card .Prior to his mass shooting resulting in the death of 18 victims. Mr. Card punched a fellow soldier and threatened to “shoot up” the Army Reserve facility in Saco, Maine, and other places. The soldier texted a superior officer “I believe he’s

messed up in the head,” the soldier, identified as Staff Sergeant Hodgson, wrote, adding that he loved Mr. Card “to death” but “I do not know how to help him and he refuses to get help or to continue help.”
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/02/us/Maine-shooting-mental-health-laws.html>

Richard Thorpe 42 Killed Virginia Cookson in Bath,
<https://www.wabi.tv/2024/09/27/arrest-made-connection-with-bangor-womans-death/>
Michael Bailey 66 Killed his wife and daughter after calls had already been made to police about her about her mothers safety
<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/10/06/bath-police-lift-shelter-in-place-order-after-responding-to-situation/>

Plea deals are already occurring and are already too lenient for the crimes being committed. This privilege should be seen just as that. If it is broken should be charged the second time with tougher consequences.

Passage of this bill will only increase the dangers for abuse victims, to first responders, to the general public.

Please, I beg of you hear our voices and side with victims, survivors the community and vote NO on LD179.

Thank you for your time.

Bethany McInnis