

Dane Courtois  
Hiram  
LD 1049

Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I submit this written testimony as a Mainer who holds liberty and the Second Amendment above all, urging your full support for LD 1049. This bill, which removes the requirement to inform law enforcement of a concealed handgun carried without a permit, is a vital step toward reclaiming our natural rights from a government that too often peddles them back to us under the guise of permission. Maine's rugged individualism demands we reject such overreach, and LD 1049 delivers that freedom.

Rights aren't privileges to be doled out by the state—they're ours by birth. Since 2015, Maine's constitutional carry law has recognized that we don't need a permit to exercise our Second Amendment birthright. Yet the current duty to inform—a relic of the permitting era—treats us like supplicants, forcing us to confess our lawful choice to an officer during a stop, whether in Presque Isle or Portland. That's not freedom; it's the state selling our rights back to us, one checkpoint at a time. LD 1049 cuts that leash, affirming that a free Mainer answers to their conscience, not a badge, when exercising a fundamental liberty.

This isn't about disrespecting law enforcement—it's about rejecting the idea that we owe the government a heads-up for being free. A hunter in Aroostook County, a shopkeeper in Biddeford, or a hiker in Baxter State Park shouldn't have to preemptively justify their concealed carry to anyone. The Second Amendment doesn't come with a script, and neither should Maine law. Permitting was bad enough—requiring us to pay fees and beg approval for what's already ours—but this lingering “duty to inform” is a shadow of that same racket, a tax on our autonomy enforced by fear of penalty. LD 1049 ends that nonsense.

Liberty thrives when government butts out. Forcing disclosure escalates tension—imagine a late-night stop on Route 1 in Hancock County, where a nervous citizen fumbles to declare their gun, and an officer, caught off guard, reacts. Remove the mandate, and both sides can focus on the matter at hand, not a scripted dance. States like Vermont and Alaska, free of this burden, see no chaos—officers there assume folks might be armed, and life goes on. Maine's sheriffs, stretched thin across Somerset or Waldo, don't need another rule to enforce against the law-abiding; they've got real threats to chase.

And let's bury the safety myth. An armed populace—unshackled by petty mandates—deters trouble. A concealed carrier in Lewiston or a farmer in Corinth with a handgun in their belt isn't a danger; they're a bulwark against those who prey on the defenseless. Maine's low crime rate proves we handle freedom well—2023 saw more frostbite cases than gun crimes, yet the state clings to this vestige of control. LD 1049 trusts us to carry without groveling, as we should.

I implore the Judiciary Committee to pass LD 1049. Maine shines when we strip away the state's grip—permits were a sham, and this “duty to inform” is their last gasp. Stop selling our rights back to us; let us live free, answerable only to ourselves. That's the Maine way. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dane Courtois