

Michelle Fortier-Oosterman
Lyman
LD 424

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the committee:

My name is Michelle Fortier-Oosterman and I live in Lyman, Maine. I am a recently retired school social worker and LCSW in the State of Maine.

In the matter of LD 424, An Act Concerning the Concealed Carrying of a Handgun by an Individual Who is 18 Years of Age but Under 21 Years of Age, I stand Opposed.

Having served as a school social worker in Maine for 25 years, and working in a Homicide Survivors' Program prior to this work, I can state that no 18 year old should be carrying a concealed handgun. It is common knowledge in the mental health community that the frontal lobe of the brain, which manages self-control and other important executive functions of the brain, does not fully mature until after 21 years. Firearms are the leading cause of death for 18-20 year olds. 18 to 20 year olds commit gun homicides at triple the rate of adults who are 21 and older. This serves as evidence that this law endangers 18-20 year olds, as well as other citizens.

As lawmakers, it is your job to create laws that promote safety of all citizens. Please continue to close loopholes used to impede gun safety and citizen safety.

Thank you for your consideration and time on this vital safety issue.

Sincerely,

Michelle Fortier-Oosterman, LCSW