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LD 424

I am writing in strong support 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."

At 18, individuals are legally adults in every sense. They can vote, join the military, work, and are held fully accountable by the justice system. It is a glaring contradiction to allow them all the rights and responsibilities of adulthood, yet deny them the right to carry a concealed weapon for self-defense.

LD 424 restores fairness and consistency to Maine's gun laws by extending concealed carry rights to those who are legally adults but fall under 21. Currently, young adults in Maine can openly carry firearms, but are denied the ability to carry concealed. This bill does not grant new rights; it simply ensures that young people can exercise their constitutional right to self-defense without arbitrary restrictions.

There is no credible evidence to support the claim that young adults who carry firearms lawfully pose any greater public safety risk than their older counterparts. In fact, many young adults, particularly women and those living on their own, face heightened vulnerability. Denying them the right to carry concealed weapons puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to personal safety.

LD 424 is not a radical expansion of gun rights — it is a common-sense move toward equality. It restores the rights of young Mainers to defend themselves as they see fit, without unnecessary government interference.

I urge the committee to support and pass LD 424. It is a necessary step to ensure that Maine upholds constitutional rights for all adults, regardless of age, and recognizes their inherent right to self-defense.