

David Souers  
Friendship  
LD 424

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

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, Members of the committee, I am David Souers. I live in Friendship, Maine. I am a retired healthcare facility architect from a family that owned, collected and used firearms as a hobby, and for recreation, target practice, hunting and protecting our agriculture from certain wildlife, in compliance with a variety of laws protecting ourselves and others for the types of firearms, locations and use.

I am testifying in opposition to LD 424.

Our state law allows:

“Concealed carry without a permit is limited to people who are 21 or older, with the following exception: If a person is 18 years of age or older, and is on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard, or has been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces or the National Guard, and is not otherwise prohibited from carrying a firearm, the person may carry a concealed handgun. A person who is 18-20 years old and without the referenced military qualifications must have a permit to carry concealed. The law applies to both residents of Maine and non-residents.”

“Permits to carry concealed handguns” “The issuing authority shall, upon written application, issue a permit to carry concealed handguns to an applicant over whom it has issuing authority and who has demonstrated good moral character and who meets the following requirements:”

“Is 18 years of age or older”

Individuals in military and law enforcement experience are properly trained to handle and use firearms safely and responsibly. Unfortunately, we learned from the Lewiston shootings that Army Reserve Andrew Card, who falls under this category, failed to meet this expectation even though he had the training and supervision that should have protected the public. However, this should not lead us to believe that proper training and supervision has no value.

My father and grandfather both owned handguns with permits. They never handgun permits to be an onerous requirement.

18 to 21 year olds are considered to be a special group across the nation for more care in what they are allowed to do because of their propensity to be more careless and susceptible to impulsive behavior, leading to personal and public harm. The drinking age is one example of care that law makers and the public have agreed upon:

“The Uniform Standard: 21 Years of Age

Across the board, every state and the District of Columbia abide by the federally mandated minimum drinking age of 21 years. This uniformity ensures that for the vast majority of circumstances, the same age limit applies regardless of state lines for purchasing and publicly consuming alcohol. The primary intention behind this regulation is to reduce alcohol-related accidents among teenagers and young adults, a goal bolstered by research studies indicating a decrease in vehicular fatalities since its enactment.

State-Specific Exceptions and Variations

Despite the federal mandate, several states have carved out exceptions that allow for alcohol consumption under specific conditions and scenarios for individuals below the age of 21. These exceptions often reflect cultural, religious, or familial considerations.” ABSEC LLC Louisiana.

Consuming alcohol is not as deadly, nor instantly deadly, as handguns can be. Therefore restrictions on firearms should at least correspond to the standard of care in

other public safety measures. Young people because they are prone to make mistakes and use poor judgement, may not observe the drinking age and place restrictions. They are at greater risk of misusing a handgun.

We should not compound this by allowing the carry of concealed handguns without a permit.

I advocate that this LD 424 ought not to pass.