

Testimony - Josh W. in Support of

**(LD 60, HP 0035 - An Act to Require a 72-hour waiting period after the sale of a firearm)**

Dear members of the Maine State Legislature, it is my honor to offer testimony in support of LD 60 - **An Act to Require a 72-hour waiting period after the sale of a firearm**. I have asked my good friend Kathleen McGinley McFadden to share my testimony. My name is Josh and I currently reside in Framingham, Massachusetts. Throughout the course of my life, I have experienced significant hardship which has impacted me physically, mentally, and emotionally. I struggle with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of several horrific incidents which occurred in my youth. Years ago, I gave considerable thought to the notion of ending my own life. After much contemplation and research, I came to the conclusion that death via firearm would be the quickest and hopefully the least painful way to depart from this world.

I began to investigate the process of acquiring a firearm in Massachusetts, I was overwhelmed by the number of steps, extensive requirements, time and commitment needed to obtain a firearm permit and license. As time went by, and I looked deeper within myself, I realized all the effort I could spend in pursuing my own death, I could also invest in self-care, psychiatric treatment, and family and friends, all of which would be much easier to obtain. Since then, my health has improved significantly and I'm in a much better place than I was all those years ago. I may not be completely healed, as anyone who suffers from PTSD carries the impact throughout their life. I look back on those dark years with caution and reverence, knowing how that time allowed me to grow and mature in so many ways.

When most people hear of gun violence in America, they assume the scenario of one individual killing another when in reality, the most common form of gun violence in the country is suicide and its attempts. "I am thankful for the gun safety laws in Massachusetts. They absolutely saved my life. If I was able to obtain a firearm easier, I probably would not be here today. "In sharing my story I'm reminded of an excerpt from the Jewish Talmud I saw at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, *"To save one life is to save the world entire. For whoever saves one life, saves an entire generation of people and descendants."*

We have reached a precipice in our nation and too many people are dying with family, friends, and communities being devastated by something which is entirely preventable. I've traveled the world and have seen firsthand how gun ownership is managed in other nations. If they are able to find the

balance between citizens acquiring and owning firearms and preventing mass gun violence, there is no reason why America can't do the same.

I understand the will and experience of one man may not be able to make a huge difference, but if firearm legislation was able to save my life, I'm certain it can save another. Maine is an absolutely wonderful state with beautiful geography, a rich history, and amazing people. In fact I hope to move there one day, I thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to share my story as well as for your time and consideration.

Warm regards, Josh.