

Testimony to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee regarding:

"An Act to Increase and Enhance School Safety by Allowing Individuals with Concealed Carry Permits to Possess Handguns on School Property"

I am Richard Coshow, a registered Democrat, a citizen of Bridgton, Maine and an unpaid volunteer citizen. I am not a paid lobbyist.

To the honorable members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, thank you for taking your time to receive input from citizens of Maine on this important piece of proposed legislation.

But before I begin, I note **seven** states allow carry by allowed individuals (Delaware, Hawaii, Kansas, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oregon, and Utah) and **eleven** more allow carry by **teachers!** (Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming.) **Over 16 states. 16!**

So, I promise to keep my comments short, as you have a full day regardless, but present you with a stark choice today, based on my brief allotment:

"Values"

Values are simply defined as the principles that help you to decide what is right and wrong, and how to act in various situations.

"Right and Wrong" in various situation. A simple concept.

What you value, how you show your values, and how you act to protect and support your values tell me **everything** I need to know about you.

Do you value your children, your grandchildren, spouses, friends and other relatives more than your value yourself? Your own being?

Of course not. You value all lives equally, and your life no more than others. Equally. Perhaps more, as in the case of children, or grandchildren.

So I propose a rhetorical question:

Why are you guarded by armed guards? Why are you generally ensconced behind guards at a security station, attended by guards that are armed?

Do you believe yourselves more worthy than children? Your answer to that question tells me **everything** I need to know about you.

The Bills before you today in this Hearing Room, LD's 52, 518, 1326 and 1557 are all value assessments that will tell me your values.

Do you value children, and will you support these four Bills, or will you ignore my question and reject the Bills?

Do you value children, and will you support these four Bills, or will you ignore the question