

Testimony for Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, in support of LD 2283,
**"An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the
Safety of the Public"**

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GOOD AFTERNOON, AND THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF LD 2283, TO HELP MAKE THE CASE FOR CREATING A **CRISIS INTERVENTION ORDER**, ALSO KNOWN AS AN EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDER, A TOOL THAT WILL SAVE LIVES OF OUR FAMILIES, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND FELLOW CITIZENS OF MAINE.

IT IS DIFFICUT TO KNOW HOW TO MOST EFFECTIVLEY PERSUADE YOU THAT CREATING THIS **CRISIS INTERVENTION ORDER** IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STEPS THAT LAWMAKERS CAN TAKE TO MAKE OUR HOMES, SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, SYNOGOGUES, BOWLING ALLEYS, AND COMMUNITIES SAFER.

BUT, IN THE WAKE OF THE TRAGIC MASS SHOOTING LAST FALL IN LEWISTON, HOW CAN WE NOT TAKE THIS STEP?

SOME HAVE ARGUED—AND WILL CONTINUE TO ARGUE—THAT FAMILY MEMBERS OUGHT NOT BE GRANTED THE RIGHT TO ASK A JUDGE TO ORDER THAT FIREARMS BE TEMPORARILY SEPARATED FROM A LOVED ONE, EVEN WHEN THAT PERSON IS FOUND TO POSE AN EXTREME RISK TO HIMSELF/HERSELF OR OTHERS. I ASK YOU, "IS THE RIGHT OF AN INDIVIDUAL TO POSSESS GUNS MORE VALUABLE THAN THE LIVES AND SAFETY OF PEOPLE IN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AROUND HIM OR HER?"

IN THE FACE OF LEGITIMATE FEAR OF SERIOUS HARM BY AN ANGRY, DISTURBED OR ILL FAMILY MEMBER TO HIMSELF OR OTHERS, SHOULD THE ONLY ALTERNATIVES BE: 1, DOING NOTHING; OR 2, TRYING TO GET THE POLICE TO INTERVENE, TAKING THE LOVED ONE INTO POLICE CUSTODY, SECURING A MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION, AND THEN FINDING A JUDGE?

WHY SHOULD WE NOT HAVE A SECOND, LESS COMPLICATED OPTION, A SECOND TOOL, AVAILABLE TO FAMILY MEMBERS, IF A LOVED ONE IS IN CRISIS AND LIVES ARE AT EXTREME RISK?

THE LEWISTON MASS SHOOTING HAS BEEN EXAMINED IN DETAIL, AND THE COMMISSION'S WORK CONTINUES. WE NOW KNOW THAT AS FAR BACK AS MAY, 2023, MR. CARD'S FAMILY KNEW THAT HE WAS PARANOID, AND THEY OPENLY WORRIED ABOUT HIS ACCESS TO GUNS. NATIONAL GUARDSMEN ALSO KNEW THAT HE POSED A GRAVE RISK, BECAUSE THEY HAD HEARD CARD TALK ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT DO. CLEARLY A CRISIS WAS EVIDENT; PEOPLE IN CARD'S ORBIT WERE AT EXTREME RISK.

THE SAGADAHOC COUNTY SHERRIFF'S OFFICE WAS ALERTED AND DEPUTIES TRIED TO FIND AND TALK WITH MR. CARD. AS WE KNOW, THEY WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL. NOTWITHSTANDING THE COMMISSION'S STATEMENT THAT LAW ENFORCEMENT DID NOT DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE, WE ARE LEFT WONDERING, *WHAT ELSE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE?*

WE DO NOT KNOW FOR SURE IF LIVES WOULD ACTUALLY HAVE BEEN SAVED HAD THE LEGISLATURE ENACTED THIS KIND OF LAW FIVE YEARS AGO. BUT, WE MUST ASK OURSELVES, "COULD USE OF A **CRISIS INTERVENTIION ORDER** HAVE TAKEN US DOWN A DIFFERENT PATH, AND SAVED THE LIVES THAT WERE LOST, HAD THIS TOOL BEEN AVAILABLE?"

THE ANSWER IS A RESOUNDING "YES."

PLEASE FOR THOSE YOU LOVE, AND FOR EVERYONE IN MAINE, VOTE "OUGHT TO PASS" ON LD 2283. THANK YOU.

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