

Good morning, Senators, Representatives, guests and friends.

Today it is my duty, and my honor, to come before this esteemed body as not just a supporter of this bill, but as a proud Deputy Judicial Marshal, and one who would very much like to be able to end his, so far 23-year law enforcement career, by retiring from this Agency one day.

My name is Ryan Sherman, and professionally, I have served many years working as a corrections officer, a patrol officer, and currently, a Deputy Marshal. For someone like me with over 20 years in various aspects of law enforcement, being a Deputy Marshal is admittedly a great job with many benefits that put it far above other positions I've held. The hours are largely Monday through Friday, we often don't go late into the night or overnight, we typically don't have to work weekends, although it has happened, and courts are closed on holidays, so we have those off. It's outstanding! Yet we continue to have major issues recruiting dedicated officers to come work at this Agency...why?

There is no typical day of a Judicial Marshal. We listen to hours of testimony about sexual abuses against children, domestic violence, murders committed, and very often in depth and explicit accounts from victim impact statements. We regularly arrest individuals on warrants, or new crimes committed. We are aware of the dangers present in domestic disputes and how bad that can go and how quickly. Now the argument could easily be made that this type of thing is what a law enforcement officer signs on for. I can absolutely assure this body that it is not. Every law enforcement officer I know signed on because they all, myself included, believe we have a calling. As contrived as it may sound, we believe we are called to try to help make the world just a little bit better. We are Maine State law enforcement officers, and we swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Maine. Our training includes close quarters combat (CQC), room clearing, mechanics of arrest restraint and control (MARC), weapons retention, firearms qualifications and much more. Like every road officer out there, we have no idea if we will come home to our loved ones that night or not. Will the grief of the loss of the loved one cause a victim to lose all control and try to attack the defendant as many of you saw on the local news that happened in April of last year? Will the defendant in custody that is being sentenced for aggravated assault of a 14-month-old child decide to try to run and evade going to jail as happened this past September. Or maybe instead of running, this time he shows up to court for sentencing with a gun and now we are in a fight for our lives and the lives of every employee and visitor to the court that day. Every officer on the road must be cognizant of the dangers they face daily, just as we are. Our job is no

less dangerous, no less stressful, and no more predictable than any officer working the road. But we, with this Agency, believe in what we do. We believe that every citizen in this State has the absolute right to have their day in court. We believe that the domestic violence victim has a right to be safe while at one of our facilities when they are seeking protection. We screen individuals coming into our courts, we assist court customers if they are having medical issues, we help direct people who are unfamiliar with our buildings, and we try to help the courts run as fast and efficiently as possible, while someone coming into one of our buildings, may be one of the worst days of their life, and it's not about to get better.

It is for these reasons that we, with the Judicial Marshals, request this body, to allow us to be included into the 1998 Special Plan for Retirement, which would allow us to go, in short, from a 25 years of service, age 65 retirement, to a more appropriate 25 years of Service, age 55 retirement. This plan is enjoyed by most Agencies in our MSLEA Union including Adult Probation, Capital Police, Maine Marine Patrol, Maine Wardens Service and others. We are not asking to be special, and we are not asking to be better than our law enforcement counterparts. We are asking to be equal in our ability to retire at a respectable age as the rest of them, because we are doing the same job as the rest of them.

I thank this body for allowing me the time to speak to you all today and respectfully request your support of Us, as we support the judicial process in this State, we all call home.

Thank you.