

Testimony for LD 424, LD 829, LD 1049 and LD 998

Honorary members of the Judicial Committee, My name is Anne Amadon and I reside in Skowhegan. I am here to testify in support of LD 424, LD 829, LD 1049 and LD 998.

Age 18 is where we distinguish between being a minor or an adult. You can sign your own legal documents, take out a bank or school loan, vote in all elections, enter the military either voluntarily or involuntarily, etc. With a state issued Concealed Weapons Permit (CWP) you can carry a firearm. As we are a Constitutional Carry state, having a CWP should not have bearing on ability to carry a firearm.

The ability to carry a firearm in state parks with a CWP versus without one is honestly a very confusing mess, and it shouldn't be. Again, we are a Constitutional Carry state and laws should be the same regardless of having a CWP or not. We should standardize laws to reflect that.

When someone is pulled over by the police or sheriff for a minor traffic violation, such as a taillight out or expired inspection sticker or even speeding, the last thing either the officer or the driver wants is to increase the tension and risks by having to reveal to the officer that they are carrying a firearm. The concept of carrying concealed is that no one knows you have a firearm on you, unless you need to use it. The gun stays put and no one touches it, removing the possible chance of appearing threatening. Then the officer can just issue the warning or citation and both go in their own directions, without any harm or issue. That is how it goes if you have a CWP. But without a CWP, you currently have "the duty to inform" the officer you are carrying a firearm. Now the officer has to decide in an instant if you are reaching for your wallet or your gun. Are you undoing your seatbelt or reaching for your gun. Do they make you take it out and give it to them, or just tell you to leave it in place. All add significant risk for a misinterpreted movement by the driver as being an immediate threat to the officer. I'm sure you can see where the results of that could be devastating. Again, we are a Constitutional Carry state. It is time we make our laws reflect that.

The constitution protects our rights to keep and bear arms, and be able to protect ourselves and our loved ones from immediate threats of significant physical harm or death. Even though I may not be able to carry a firearm at work, I should be able to defend myself when I stop at a store or friends house on the way home or even while entering my own home (etc.). The ability to leave your handgun safely secured in your parked car while at work prevents those basic rights from being infringed.