

# **LD 424 - An Act Concerning the Concealed Carrying of a Handgun by an Individual Who Is 18 Years of Age but Under 21 Years of Age**

Judiciary Committee 03/26/2025

Testimonial of David G. Fitz MD

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is David Fitz. I'm from Cumberland, Maine, where I've lived for 45 years. I'm a husband, father, grandfather, a gun owner, hunter, fisherman, and a retired surgeon.

On the surface this bill sounds reasonable, but it is a bad idea. I'm here to testify against the bill.

A few people in this room remember when the idea of "old enough to fight, old enough to drink (and vote)" came to fruition. In the early seventies, just before the end of the Vietnam war, a number of states passed laws, lowering the drinking age from 21 to as low as 18. Voting age was dropped to 18. The drinking age seemed like a good idea based on the European experience, with the minimum age being as low as 16 in some countries. Voting age has been successful.

The drinking age of 18 proved to be a disaster, because the judgment of 18 year olds varies significantly. Rates of alcohol associated auto accidents and deaths skyrocketed around the country, and a movement began to raise the age back to 21.

It happened gradually, state by state, until 1984 with federal enactment of The Minimum Drinking Age Act.

I remember this time period well AND I remember well the difference between my judgment at 18 and at 21.

We all know people who were "late bloomers," or disasters until mid 20's or later. Judgment doesn't necessarily come in a straight line curve against age. It may be in jumps and starts, as well as in a "delayed" mode. Real data: the most common age of auto accidents in males is 16-24.

We've all witnessed Kyle Rittenhouse's situation: a high school drop out, who tried to enlist in the Marines, but was rejected. He obtained an AR-15 through a straw purchase, and for various reasons, drove across state lines to "protect businesses" during rioting and significant unrest: A 17 year old with his hat on backwards and carrying a military style assault weapon, no training. 2 people dead; one wounded. Now, 4 years later, he still has bad judgment, and is remains uneducated.

We don't need underage men trying to prove themselves, pretending to be tough, pretending to be police officers, or pretending to be military. Judgment comes with more time and experience. 21 is a bare minimum.

Please vote "ought not to pass" for this dangerous bill.

Thank you

David G. Fitz MD

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