

David Souers
Friendship
LD 998

LD 998 An Act Regarding an Employer's Authority to Prohibit an Employee from Storing a Firearm in the Employee's Vehicle

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, Members of the committee, I am David Souers. I live in Friendship, Maine. I am a retired healthcare facility architect from a family that owned, collected and used firearms as a hobby, and for recreation, target practice, hunting and protecting our agriculture from certain wildlife, in compliance with a variety of laws protecting ourselves and others for the types of firearms, locations and use.

I am here to testify against LD 998.

The current law states that an employer is not permitted to prohibit an employee from storing a firearm in the employee's vehicle if the employee has a valid permit to carry a concealed firearm under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, chapter 252, as long as the vehicle is locked and the firearm is stored out of sight. The bill removes the specification that the employee must have a valid permit to carry a concealed firearm.

Why remove the “valid permit to carry a concealed firearm” requirement? What is the good reason for LD 998?

Work place firearm violence and deaths have become more common in recent decades with employees taking out their grievances on their employer or other employees. Workplaces are rarely armed for protection against these violent situations. Nor is it a practical, or healthy, or productive when workers and employers are worried about firearm violence inside or outside the workplace.

Maintaining the permit requirement preserves that an employee who wants to store a firearm in their vehicle at the very least must go through the permit process with the minimum vetting requirements and effort involved. Permits make the purchase and owning of a firearm a more conscientious and professional-like endeavor. This requirement hopefully keeps the number of firearms brought to work at a reduced level. And, hopefully it prevents an employee from compulsively going out and buying a firearm when they are getting agitated about their work conditions that might lead to their using a firearm in the workplace.

The idea that the present law would not stop a law breaker from buying a firearm and without a permit store it in their car and possibly use it in the workplace, therefore the permit requirement should be struck, is an argument that would imply that all laws should be struck. That no law breaker ever complies, that all lawful people would behave lawfully without laws. This argument leaves law enforcement and judicial departments without any tools, and society without any standards or guidelines or norms for personal behavior and for social enforcement.

I advocate that this LL998 ought not to pass.