

Kyle Kent  
Kent Ordnance Technologies  
LD 1378  
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My name is Kyle Kent, and I appear before you (by email as I was unable to make this appearance with less than 48 hours of notice.) as a proud citizen of the State of Maine a state built on independence, self-reliance, and a deep respect for constitutional liberty. I come here today in firm opposition to any effort to implement or expand so-called “red flag” laws, or extreme risk protection orders, in our great state.

**Maine Values Liberty and Due Process.**

Maine has a long tradition of valuing personal freedom and individual rights. Red flag laws threaten that legacy. These laws allow for the confiscation of firearms from individuals without prior notice, without a hearing, and often without any criminal charge — undermining the due process protections guaranteed under the Maine Constitution (Article I, Sections 6-A and 16) and the United States Constitution.

In Maine, we do not strip rights away in secret or based on accusation alone. We believe in confronting problems head-on with fairness, evidence, and justice.

Maine is a close-knit state, but like any community, we have our disputes family issues, breakups, political tensions. Red flag laws can be weaponized by angry exes, feuding neighbors, or political enemies, allowing them to file petitions that can result in someone’s firearms being seized before they’ve even had the chance to respond.

That’s not justice. That’s government backed vigilantism, and it has no place in a free state like Maine.

**Mental Health, Not Gun Confiscation.**

If someone poses a true threat to themselves or others, the answer is not just to remove their firearms it’s to get them real help. Maine already has tools in place, such as protective custody orders and the existing “yellow flag” law, which include medical evaluations and judicial oversight. If anything, these tools should be improved, not bypassed.

Red flag laws provide a false sense of security by taking away the tool, not addressing the behavior.

Many Mainers particularly our veterans and first responders own firearms and also face the burdens of trauma, stress, and isolation. Red flag laws will discourage them from seeking mental health support, fearing that doing so might strip them of their rights. We should be building trust with those who served us, not threatening to punish them for asking for help.

**We Don’t Trade Liberty for Illusions**

Maine has one of the highest rates of lawful firearm ownership per capita in the nation and also one of the lowest rates of gun violence. We have proven that respect for gun rights and public safety can coexist.

Red flag laws set a dangerous precedent where rights can be stripped without trial, where suspicion outweighs evidence, and where political popularity trumps constitutional principle. That’s not the Maine way. That’s not the American way.

I urge you, as stewards of our Constitution and guardians of Maine’s proud heritage of liberty, to oppose any red flag legislation and reject any attempt to sacrifice due process for a false promise of safety. Let’s pursue real solutions mental health

resources, criminal accountability, and community support while standing firm on the bedrock principles that make Maine strong.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our state.