

Testimony in support of LD 1312

Senator Carpenter, Representative Bailey, and members of the Judiciary committee,

The youth leaders of the Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition have been fighting for the Red Flags Bill since Senator Dion's previous version last year. We believe that the bill is essential to keeping young people in Maine safe.

Suicide among teens is sadly extremely prevalent in the United States. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for children, adolescents, and young adults aged 5- to 24- years old. As teenagers, almost all of us know someone with suicidal tendencies. We need to fight this crisis to protect ourselves and our friends.

Red Flags Bills throughout the country have been associated with drastic decreases in suicide rates. Maine's young population needs this. The combination of easy access to firearms and a lack of recognition for mental health issues is extremely dangerous. We've been waiting on this bill to be passed for a year now. We've been waiting on legislators to protect their children and the youth of Maine. It's time to get it done.

Pearl Benjamin  
Founder, Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition  
Camden