

News From The States

THIS WEEK IN COMMENTARY

Welcome to the best opinion pieces of the week from **News From The States**. Our commentary includes our own journalists from across our extensive network as well as outside voices to bring a wide range of perspectives and ideas. In addition to the sampling below, [you can look through all our commentary here](#).

TOP COMMENTARY OF THE WEEK

Rebuilding our mental health system takes money and time. Gun reforms can happen now.

Lauren McCauley | *Maine Morning Star*



*Miia Zellner, an artist who teaches in nearby Turner, made about a dozen or so cardboard hearts and nailed them to trees along Main Street Lewiston a day after the Oct. 25 mass shooting.
(Emma Davis/Maine Morning Star)*

After U.S. Rep. Jared Golden's public change of heart over the need for an assault weapons ban, Republicans, including potential rivals for his 2nd District congressional seat, said he was politicizing the tragedy in Lewiston.

Maine GOP chair Joel Stetkis issued a statement saying "it is clear that many politicians are seeking to capitalize on this tragedy by pushing for radical changes to Maine laws."

State Rep. Austin Theriault, who is among Golden's Republican challengers, said the Democratic congressman was trying to "score political points by attacking the 2nd Amendment."

Theriault, who represents Fort Kent in the legislature, also said that we are seeing the "consequences of our political inaction" to "invest in the people who are struggling the most."

"I'm calling for the largest-ever investment in mental health care and access that the country has ever seen," Theriault vowed.

That is no small promise, and I would genuinely love to hear more about this plan.

[Read this commentary](#)

[We asked a state agency for some basic information eight months ago. We're still waiting.](#)

J. Patrick Coolican | *Minnesota Reformer*

[Lawmakers should consider red flag law before campus carry goes into effect in West Virginia](#)

Leann Ray | *West Virginia Watch*

[Name the problem](#)

Brian Lyman | *Alabama Reflector*

[Kansas Speaks poll proves majorities support bold change, but GOP leaders have plugged their ears](#)

Clay Wirestone | *Kansas Reflector*

[Lack of child care is holding Indiana back but lawmakers can change the game](#)

Niki Kelly | *Indiana Capital Chronicle*

Oklahoma may be losing in bids for businesses because lawmakers focus on wrong issues

Janelle Stecklein | *Oklahoma Voice*

Harmony eludes Louisiana efforts to help its music industry thrive

Greg LaRose | *Louisiana Illuminator*

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