



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1974

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H.P. 1318

House of Representatives, May 13, 2025

### **An Act to Affirm Parental Rights**

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Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative CARUSO of Caratunk.  
Cosponsored by Representatives: BABIN of Fort Fairfield, CHAPMAN of Auburn,  
FREDERICKS of Sanford, POIRIER of Skowhegan, Senator: TIMBERLAKE of  
Androscoggin.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §14** is enacted to read:

3 **§14. Parents joint natural guardians; fundamental right**

4 **1. Parents joint natural guardians of children.** Parents are the joint natural  
5 guardians of their minor children and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and  
6 services of their children. Neither parent has any rights paramount to the rights of the other  
7 with reference to any matter affecting their children.

8 **2. Fundamental right.** The liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and  
9 care of the parent's child is a fundamental right.

10 **3. Construction.** This section may not be construed to affect the decision of a court  
11 regarding parental rights and responsibilities or the termination of parental rights.

12 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §4003-A** is enacted to read:

13 **§4003-A. Parents joint natural guardians; fundamental right**

14 **1. Parents joint natural guardians of children.** Parents are the joint natural  
15 guardians of their minor children and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and  
16 services of their children. Neither parent has any rights paramount to the rights of the other  
17 with reference to any matter affecting their children.

18 **2. Fundamental right.** The liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and  
19 care of the parent's child is a fundamental right.

20 **3. Construction.** This section may not be construed to affect the decision of a court  
21 regarding parental rights and responsibilities or the termination of parental rights.

22 **SUMMARY**

23 This bill provides that parents are the joint natural guardians of their minor children  
24 and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and services of their children. It also  
25 provides that the liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and care of the  
26 parent's child is a fundamental right.