



126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 209

H.P. 170

House of Representatives, February 5, 2013

An Act To Strengthen the Rights of Grandparents under the Grandparents Visitation Act

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative FREDETTE of Newport.
Cosponsored by Senator KATZ of Kennebec.

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

Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §1802, sub-§2 is enacted to read:

2. Sufficient existing relationship. "Sufficient existing relationship" means a relationship between the child and the grandparent in which the grandparent is playing or has played a significant beneficial role in the child's life. "Sufficient existing relationship" includes, but is not limited to, a relationship in which the grandparent has acted as a parent to the child.

SUMMARY

This bill amends the Grandparents Visitation Act to provide a definition of "significant existing relationship." A grandparent who can prove a sufficient existing relationship with a grandchild has standing to seek contact with the child. This new definition provides that a grandparent who proves that the grandparent is playing or has played a significant beneficial role in the child's life can establish standing to proceed with the action. This bill makes clear that, although acting as a parent to a child meets the requirements of a "sufficient existing relationship" with a child, that is not the only relationship that meets the requirements.