

An Act to Correct Inconsistencies, Conflicts and Errors in the Laws of Maine
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
Public Hearing Date: April 10, 2024
Testimony in Support of LD LD 2290

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Rhonda L. Haws and I reside in Pittston, Maine. I submit this letter in support of LD 2290.

The current law (LD 765) allows forensic interviews to be used to mitigate some of the harm of having children having to fully re-disclose their abuse in a courtroom. It is a positive step in mitigating some retraumatization that happens when children have to redisclose trauma repeatedly, and especially in a courtroom setting with many strangers, and their abuser.

There are children currently in need of that same protection and care. Because the law didn't explicitly state that it applies to pending cases, Judges aren't able to admit the interviews. Please extend this care to pending cases, and help children who are in this situation right now.

There is a child I know that is impacted by this, and it would mean a tremendous difference in their court experience to have this amendment passed. Please extend the current decision to include forensic interviews to the children who need it most, going through these processes right now.

For these reasons, I am in support of LD 2290 as emergency legislation.

Thank you,
Rhonda L. Haws

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rhonda L. Haws". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.