

Jennifer Prenier  
Dennysville, ME  
LD 2290

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Jennifer Prenier and I was born and raised in Dennysville, Maine. Although I am currently a resident of South Dakota, my husband and I are moving back to Maine this year. Therefore, I felt it important that I submit this letter in support of LD 2290 as a long time and soon to be again Maine resident.

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 re-traumatization that happens when children have to redisclose trauma repeatedly, especially in a courtroom setting with many strangers, and continually see their abuser.

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

There is a child I know personally that is impacted by this, and it would mean a tremendous difference in their court experience to have this amendment passed.

I also spent 4 years working at a Special Purpose Private School with many students who had been sexually abused. I have seen the lifelong impact this kind of trauma can cause children and adults first hand.

I also have a very close friend who has been haunted by her abuser for many years and have seen the terror in her eyes at the thought of having to see him in court every time. Although this current bill is directed at protecting children, I strongly believe it should extend to all those who have lived through traumatic abuse - child or adult - woman or man.

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,  
Jennifer Prenier