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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton

LD 537, An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action

Submitted to the Judiciary Committee

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Holly Eaton, and I represent House District 15, which includes the communities of Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooklin, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Isle au Haut and Vinalhaven. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of **LD 537, An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action.**

I was not a sponsor of this legislation, but when I read the bill, I immediately knew how critical this issue is—because it has already happened in our communities.

Recently, a situation arose where an adult doxed a student, deliberately sharing private information in a way that put the minor at risk. One of my constituents' 16-year-old daughters reacted with total disbelief, saying, "She doxxed a kid?" That reaction says everything. Even teenagers—who have grown up in the digital world—understand that targeting a minor in this way is not just inappropriate, but completely unacceptable.

LD 537 is a necessary and timely response to a growing problem. Doxing is not just an online inconvenience—it has real-world consequences. When personal identifying information is shared without consent and with harmful intent, minors can face harassment, threats, and even physical danger. This bill ensures that families have a way

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor, Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven

to seek relief when their children are targeted and that those who dox minors can be held accountable.

Importantly, this bill is carefully written to protect free speech while ensuring that malicious online behavior does not go unchecked. It acknowledges valid exceptions for lawful reporting, whistleblowing, and constitutionally protected speech. But what it does not allow is the reckless or intentional exposure of a child's private information in a way that causes harm.

This is common-sense legislation that reflects our shared responsibility to protect Maine's children. I urge the committee to support LD 537 and ensure that no minor in our state is put at risk through this dangerous practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Holly Eaton
House District 15