

Testimony of Rita Furlow  
Senior Policy Analyst Maine Children's Alliance  
Before the Joint Standing Committee Judiciary  
on LD 537,  
An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action  
March 3, 2025

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative, and members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, Health and Human Services. My name is Rita Furlow, and I am the Senior Policy Analyst at the Maine Children's Alliance. We are a statewide, non-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to promoting sound public policies and best practices that enhance the lives of Maine children, youth, and families.

Today, I am here to support LD 537, *An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action*. As adults, it is our responsibility to safeguard children from harm. With the increasing prevalence of online communication and interactions, particularly on social media, we must take proactive measures to protect children who may become targets of online harassment. This legislation empowers the family of a child who has been harmed to pursue civil litigation and seek injunctive relief from a court to stop the perpetrator of the harm.

Unlike a single harmful incident in person, the online nature of harm targeted toward children amplifies due to the persistent presence of the information on the internet. Once harmful information targeting a child is online, its spread across multiple platforms and apps becomes challenging to contain. The advancement of technology has enabled this practice to cause potential unimaginable harm to individual children.

We support allowing families to swiftly seek legal action to prevent potential harm to their children. Doxing poses significant and enduring risks to children. The sharing of personally identifiable information may compromise their health, safety, and even their life.

The potential physical and emotional harm caused to children by "doxing" should be unacceptable in our state. The sharing of photographs or highly personal information about a child online with the intention of causing harm clearly warrants our state's efforts to prevent such practices. We urge the committee to recognize the importance of safeguarding children from online harm through practices like doxing. Our laws must evolve and adapt to keep pace with technological advancements and evolving online practices that can pose substantial risks to children.

Thank you for your consideration.